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THE WILDERNESS SHALL BLOSSOM AS THE ROSE

By
ELIZABETH GIBSON CHEYNE

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THE WILDERNESS SHALL BLOSSOM AS THE ROSE.

Most of us dread the wilderness, until we have come to dwell in it. But when God gives us our home there, and when we accept the Divine location with thankfulness, not only do our lives break into singing, but the wilderness itself blossoms as the rose, as the seer of an older day foretold. The solitudes of retirement, and the spaces of loneliness are peopled with the invisible gardeners of all the Ages—the prophets, the martyrs, the saviours, and all the servants of the Loving Apportioner of Life; and they rejoice in giving their silent counsels to every comer into the wilderness, and in watching the grain swell in His furrows of discipline, and the flowers spring in His garden of grace.

The wilderness shall blossom as the rose.

O THOU, Who callest us from the pleasaunces of Life's childhood into the solemnity of the wilderness, draw us into the majesties of its quietness and immensity, its mysterious sunsets, and its illuminating dawns; and give us the invisible companionship of all, who have learned to give thanks for its experience.

THE WAR.

On the face of it, the War seems to be the profoundest of tragedies; but the causes of the War are a deeper tragedy still. The necessity for such a tremendous lesson to His children must have caused the Parent Heart anguish inconceivable to man. Think of the tenderness of God's Passion, which is strong enough to nail one after another of His beloved sons to the Redemptive Cross. How many of us are faithful enough, and loving enough, to be surgical towards our best beloved, for their healing? Many of us think that we could make so much better a world than God has made, by creating a world without suffering, and we try to

eliminate suffering from God's world, and resentfully criticise His methods. We forget that it is through pain that we learn the vital secrets of life, and that it is through suffering that we grow strong. All suffering, whether mental or physical, brings a detachment from materiality and unreality, drawing the soul irresistibly into communion with the spiritual and the real. In the grip of anguish, every man's language is a cry; and every man's prayer: "Let this cup pass." But to those, whose prayer rises to the sublime eminence: "Nevertheless not my will, but Thine, be done!" is given the honour of sharing the Passion of Him, Who is evermore lifted up upon the World-Cross, the head of which is high in Heaven, that the One, Who is sacrificed, may see above and beyond the things of time and space. Many of us say: "Let those, who deserve to suffer, pay their penalties; yet why should the unoffending be enormously and unnecessarily penalized?" But we must learn to see that the Law of Vicarious Suffering makes us akin to each other, as nothing else can; and also that it makes us the humble brothers and sisters of our Blessed Lord, the Willing Lamb of God, Who has made sacrifice for evermore adorable. We cannot expect to love the Cross, until we love the fruits of the Cross; but, when once we recognise their beauty, and their healing power, we learn to love the Tree of Life, and to understand that it is for the salvation of the nations, and for the sanctification of individual souls. The momentary and joyous *Ave*, the long and mournful *Vale*; the shattering of health; the passing through the Dark Valley—are these well? Ask it not of us, your embattled and bewildered brothers and sisters, lest we fail of the true answer that our faltering lips would give; but close your eyes, and listen; and you shall see the triumphant Procession of the Blessed Company, on the Other Side, and hear their songs of ineffable joy, sung to the majestic music, that is Heaven's harmony of earth's discordant cries. Believe that God is not only above all, but *in* all, and *through* all. We do not really believe in God, unless we believe in

His kind Over-Ruling of all things—trial, tribulation, loss, anguish—for our perfecting and His glory. When man has learnt to say, submissively: "Thy Will be done;" and to participate joyfully in *doing* the Will of God, it may no longer need the mark of the beast and his tramlings to vivify and intensify the continual Adoration of the Lamb.

MAY we so realise the holy dignity of suffering, O our God, that we may fulfil our earth-mission — the spreading of Thy Kingdom. Amen.

GOD IS LOVE.

The one crying need in the lives of most of us is the need of Realization. We have grown so accustomed to the thrilling news of the Glorious Gospel of the Son of God, that it falls on deaf ears, and, if not on deaf ears, on lifeless hearts. We repeat constantly in our formal worship: "I believe . . . I believe . . . ;" but there can be no real belief, until those words become the utmost livingness of our being, the most ardent fire of our thought, the intensest spring of our actions. From earliest childhood, we have learned to say: "I believe in God," and "God is love;" and we have been taught to honour the Man of Sorrows, Who brought us the divine message that God is Love, with a ceremonial worship. Let us, indeed, honour Him with what offerings we may — of action, of voice, of sacrifice: but let us understand that all apparent reverence is worthless, unless it springs from the complete devotion of the realizing heart . . . Let us close our eyes to visibility, and pause; filling our being with the one stupendous idea that GOD IS LOVE . . . *God is Love*; do we not know it, O our sisters and our brothers of the human fellowship of labour and of sorrow, of peace and of delight? Can we not look back upon every anguish, every adversity, every toiling, yea, even every sin; and truthfully say that each hard and dark experience has taught us that

God is Love? God is Love—in making, breaking, renewing; God is Love—in leading, showing, teaching; God is Love—in appointing, directing, fulfilling. Can we not scan our rejoicing delight in Beauty, in Art, in Love, in receiving and in bestowing pity and mercy, in all high happiness, and say triumphantly: "God is Love!"? Verily, God is Love—Strong Mercy, High Passion, LOVE—that never suffers us to find any rest, **except** in Himself; that eternally insists on response, through gentle means, or stern; Love that developes, on every plant of sin, not only the thorn of penalty, but also the blossom of expiation, and the holy fruit of experience; and that brings forth on every tree of happiness innumerable leaves for the healing of the world's woes. Truly, none of us can fail of this high knowledge; and it only needs, for our continual salvation, that we should, in sweet and earnest simplicity, open the windows and doors of our hearts to the Love of God, and never close them again, that we may be so filled with, and permeated by that Love, that we shall know and live no other life than Its triumphant Realisation.

BRING us all, O Almighty Love, into the continual Realization of Thee, that our love may grow up into Thine, so that we may become one with Thee, in thought, word and act; for His sake, Who taught us of the might of Thy Love, and of the possibilities of our own. Amen.

PROMPTERS.

We cannot all be playwrights, writing the heavenly play of life; nor can we all be players, acting, in any certain manner of zest, that eternal drama. Yet we, in our sad-coloured robes, may abide in the playhouse, following the action in our thought, and anticipating the speech of the actors; serving as prompters, quietly and humbly holding the Holy Playbook, behind the vivid

scene; to help those, chosen by the Divine Appointer, who do not know, or who, through timidity, falter in their parts.

O LORD of the Eternal Drama of Life, let our hearts be so set upon Thy Holy Book, and our hands be so worthy of holding it, that we may be ever ready to prompt a player, on the instant of his anxiety, that he fail not to represent Thee, on the stage of the world. Amen.

SORROW NOT, EVEN AS THE REST, WHICH HAVE NO HOPE.

We cannot fully find God until we have passed through the agony of desolation; therefore sorrow is the Loving Hand of Our Father, drawing us tenderly to Himself. And, when dear God has drawn us to Himself, we no longer need the help of sorrow, but are brought into the bound of august and sacred joy. Verily, God loves us enough to give us the same gifts as He gave to Our Blessed Lord—the sword, the cross, and the grave. Let us not churlishly resent sorrow, and wilfully exclude God from our lives by deeming ourselves inconsolably forsaken; for has not Blessed Jesus said that no sparrow falls to the ground without the care of the All-Loving? And is not man also in the Hand of Almighty Love? Every man born says secretly to himself: “Was ever sorrow like unto my sorrow?” And truly, in the flood of tears, man comes nigh to drowning. But let us enquire of the lovers of God, who have overcome sorrow, and they will tell us that the turbid flood of sorrow can subside into the sweet and tranquil stream of peace; and that only intensity can beget intensity, so that tribulation and anguish may be the faithful father and mother of the immortal child—joy. Are you now mourning for your beloved, who have passed from sight? Believe that their illness and death were but the uncertain

twilight, that preceded the rapturous light of their homegoing; for man, who came from God, returns to God. And, if you will believe this (and no minute of life is lived, in either things temporal, or things eternal, without faith), you shall know that the lover of God never walks alone: a Hand upholds him in every faintness; and a Light illuminates every darkness, that falls upon him. God will teach you, if you are willing to learn, that wherever you are, there also is your lover; and, if your lover is in Paradise, there you may be also. In Paradise, we do not only find those, whom we have known and loved; but we shall also be with our unknown brothers and sisters of the Love of God. If you habitually think of your Departed as being with God, and if you yourself strive to live habitually with God, you will become able to meet your Beloved *in* God. Some have found this an unfailing way to meet their Holy Departed – asking God to give their love to the one, who has gone ahead; and then saying to that loved one: “I do not commit thee to beautiful and quiet memory; I abide with thee in the living Presence of the Highest.” The way to God, and to our Holy Departed, is sure and certain (Glory be to God!), but any man may make his own method of finding the Way. And what is simpler than to turn in thankful meekness to Him, Who said: “I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life”? The golden joy of the Communion of Saints is not merely the sunlit shallowness of feeling, but the sun-permeated depth of experience. Most of the overcomers of sorrow have conquered through their continual cry: “Lord I believe; help Thou mine unbelief.” Those, whom the Dayspring from on High has visited, are praying with you and for you, and triumphantly assure you of your eventually emerging from your night of sorrow into the Glorious Light of God and of His Saints. The Blessing of Almighty God, and of all the faithful, be upon you now and evermore. Amen.

FOR USE.

God has made us all for many different divine uses: for the homeliest expression of simple honesty towards Life; for the charming exercise of the courteous and sweet graciousness, that makes gracefulness; for the solemn and stately dignities, that uphold high majesty; for the meek and gentle single-mindedness, that creates unselfishness; for the deliberate and steadfast renunciations, that defeat lust; for the ardent and courageous rebel-heartedness, that sweeps tyranny from before His Way; for the plain kindness, that is the moving spring of the human and divine brotherhood; for the wise shrewdness, that is the enduring salt of the earth, biting into and cleansing whatever it touches. Use, use, use! Let us get it into our minds that we are here, not for our own amusement; not for the mental or physical excitation of ourselves and our fellowbeings; but for God's holy use. And let our minds persuade our hearts, that our hearts may angelically control our actions, against all vanity, greed and selfness, unto our continual salvation.

O OUR kind Creator, may our happy and firm willingness help Thee to use us more and more. Take us into Thy Hand, and use us to write Thy Glorious Name all over the world--the Triune Name of Thine Eternal Majesty. May we be as dearworthy to Thee, in serving Thine incomprehensible aims, and furthering Thy universal plan, as we are honoured in Thy using of us; for His sake, Who did Thy will perfectly. Amen.

HE SHALL GIVE HIS PEOPLE THE BLESSING OF PEACE.

The desire of the Nations is set on peace; and peace is the one deep longing that fills the heart of every individual. *He shall give His people the blessing of Peace.* The mistake, that all the world is making, is in

thinking that Peace is an outward thing ; whereas Peace, the Peace of God, is the supreme spiritual gift of the Innermost Reality. The condition of the giving is the willingness to accept. No gift can be given, unless it can be received. We do not realise that NOW, even Now, God is offering us the Supreme Gift, and that Peace is the Cross, Peace is the Sword, Peace is Sacrifice. We all know the easily obtainable satisfaction of doing our duty ; but we do not all realise the less easily attainable joy of offering our Sacrifice. From the Sacrifice on Calvary, the whole world's realization of Heaven has sprung. And now the whole world is being given an opportunity for participating in the Eternal Vicarious Sacrifice of our Blessed Lord ; would that it were aware that this is also the opportunity for entering into our Blessed Lord's Peace—the Peace which is Understanding. Some of us will not accept our Cross ; some of us accept it, of necessity only, discourteously, and without grace ; some of us, thank God, accept it cheerfully, nay, even joyfully. *In the willing acceptance of the Cross, is the inevitable receiving of the Peace.* We all know that there is no joy comparable with the joy of giving, and that we all, even the worst of us, spend all our time in giving ourselves to something-or-other, whether worthily or unworthily.

Let us take heed where and how we give ourselves ; let us give ourselves to ALMIGHTY GOD, that we may magnify His Joy, and become capable of receiving His Blessing of Peace. This giving is the preparation of the manger ; and wherever the manger is prepared, the Child is born ; and He is our Peace. Peace can only come to the individual heart. No proclamation of the cessation of racial hostilities can bring real peace to the Nations. Peace is of the Spirit ; and to thousands the War has brought the Supreme Peace, because, for the first time in their lives, men have consciously and deliberately chosen to sacrifice *themselves* on the altar of humanity, that divinely appointed altar, which God has ordained in each soul, at birth. *He shall give His people*

the blessing of Peace. We are all *His people*; so none of us need go unblest. Let us cheerfully make the Complete Sacrifice that will enable Him to bestow the Supreme Gift.

OFFERING-PRAYER.

O Almighty God, Who hast given us life and love; body and spirit; visibility and invisibility; wherewith to glorify Thee; we kneel before Thee in all the clean joyfulness of renunciation, resting our hope in Thee. We thankfully offer all to Thee, Who gavest all. Let our lives be spent in Thy service; may our hearts beat in unison with Thy Great Heart; let all our offerings be made in the spirit of Blessed Jesus, Thine Eternal Son, and our living and loving Lord. As the Sword and the Cross and the Grave were His Peace, so may they be ours; that His Resurrection Joy may be ours also.

Amen and Alleluia!

GLORIA PATRI ET FILIO, ET SPIRITUI
SANCTO.

BEARING THE CROSS.

The fewer encumbrances we have to carry, the more easily and honourably we can bear the Cross; and the fewer our worldly entanglements, the simpler the Way of God before us. God, in His strong mercy, has made man as much for the Cross, as He has made the Cross for man: we have but to stretch our arms to know, symbolically, this solemn Truth. And it is only they, who shoulder the Cross by day, and lie upon it by night, thus becoming hourly familiar with it, who can be the Companions of Our Blessed Lord, and who may hope to have strength given them in *extremis*. They, who are lifted up on the Cross, which is the pinnacle of the world, see far beyond the world, and know that, not only on the horizon do earth and heaven meet, but that

they are everywhere intermingling. Earth is Heaven, and Heaven is Earth, Blessed be the Creator of both!

HELP us, O our Father, in bearing our Crosses, to commit our spirits to Thee, and to blend our wills with Thy Will, as Blessed Jesus did; and, in so doing, to hearten others on their via crucis. Amen.

HOME.

' Home is the house of our Parent; therefore man's home is with God. We are, most of us, exiles in very far countries, driven from God by our deceitful companions—our besetting sins. We know that we need not stay in exile; for has not Blessed Jesus told us the beautiful, true Home-Story? But we are too lazy, too indifferent, or too unbelieving to say: "I will arise and go unto my Father." Some of us say: "I will arise;" and we rise up in haste, to go to Him; but, by the way, we stop at many an alien gate, and either enter it, or long to enter it, for temporary shelter and rest, thus delaying our arrival Home. Those, who have come Home, abide in God: in sweet fellowship with the Father—august and tender, the Brother—strong and pitiful, and the Friend—inspiring and comforting: Blessed Three-in-One; and with the universal family of the brothers and sisters of the Infinite Mercy, and the sons and daughters of the Grace of God. If we do not abide in God, we spend our turbulent lives in battling, successfully, or unsuccessfully, with temptation; but if we abide in Him, we are safe from temptation, covered in the day of battle. Verily, in returning and rest, we shall be saved. Let us not only arise and go unto our Father, but let us bring with us any other exiles, whom we may meet by the way.

O ALL-PERVADING, Who art Thyself both Immensity and Eternity, let not Thy pilgrims of the Everlasting cling to each frail night-shelter, that they reach, thus delaying their progress towards Thy many mansions; for our Blessed Guide's sake. Amen.

THE HINDRANCE.

The greatest hindrance, in the path from man to God, is the want of simplicity. Most of our trials would disappear, if we cultivated a courageous simplicity of thought, word, and act; for most of our cares come from artificiality, insincerity, and the multiplicity of externalities. Man forgets the solemn dignities and the everlasting glories of the manger, the work-bench, the fishing-net, the footway, and the cross. Let us strip ourselves stark of riches, importance, domination, caste and self-ness; in preparation for our spirit-baptism in the clean stream, wherever the Dove broods, that the Father may be well pleased with us.

O THOU, of myriad mind, but one aim, endue us with the strength and majesty of that one aim—Love; through the profound simplicity and eternal majesty of Jesus and Mary. Amen.

WHEN THE WAR IS OVER.

People are constantly saying: "When the War is over" They do not realise that the War never was over, and never will be over—the everlasting war between good and evil, flesh and spirit, reality and unreality. It would be better than thinking and dreaming about when the War is over, if they would join in the War now, and fight with all their might on the eternal battlefield of inhumanity, sensuality, and selfishness. If God had meant man to rest in indolence, strife would not have been the origin of Creation. By our continuous strife, we can help God in His unceasing work of creating. Blessed be God, Who makes all, who are willing, strong enough, and courageous enough to fight His battles.

HELP us, dear God, to fight unceasingly, against our strongest enemy—self; in our Heavenly Captain's strength. Amen.

A LAW OF LIFE.

For every single act of utter devotion, there is a certain reward far overpassing the merit of the act, as all the devout know well. For every simple, true doing; for every plain, frank dealing; there is an establishing of the Just, the Holy One, on earth, than which there is no deeper joy to His followers. Every willing undergoing of the vital discipline of pain spreads the atoning merits of the Divine Sacrifice of Blessed Jesus, and adds radiance to the Glory of Our Lord. Love is the only medium through which Divine Grace can work out the inevitable Law of Life; and the more we love, the wider the establishing of the Kingdom of Heaven, and the more powerful the Holy Kingship of the King of all Kings.

GIVE us unceasing, responsive obedience to Thy Loving and Just Law, O Divine Lawgiver. Amen.

THE WASHING OF THE FEET.

The disciple is here to wash men's feet. He sits in the porch of the House of God, all day long; and he rests there by night, waiting to welcome wayfarers, and washing their feet; except when he is going to and fro, to fill his pitcher of sincerity at the well of the water of life, which is hard by; or when he is washing his basin and towels in the river of absolution. He is glad to wash men's feet, for he has a passion for their whiteness, as he sees it, or as he imagines it, glimmering through the red dust of anger, the black mire of lust, the yellow sand of greed, the brown soil of earthiness, or the grey mud of selfishness. It is not a virtue for a disciple thus to wash men's feet, but a natural and happy service, rendered because of the Lord's having washed the disciple's feet, thereby making the disciple want all tired feet to feel the relief of cleanness. No feet, that are not cleansed, can cross the threshold of the House, where the disciple serves. Many travellers refuse to have

their feet washed, thus precluding themselves from the privilege of entering the House of God; and some travellers' feet are too soiled for a brother to be able to cleanse them. Then Blessed Jesus says: "Let them pass on; and I, Myself, will meet them, in the desert of desolation, and will wash their feet; and they shall return to the House of Our Father, with contrite joy." It is a happy thing—to wash men's feet, by day, or by moonlight, or, sometimes, in the dark. Often the disciple needs to wash men's feet with his own tears of repentant remembrance. The true disciple never wishes to leave the precinct of the Holy House, lest any man should come, and find no servitor there.

GRANT, O Lord, unto all Thy disciples, the lowliness requisite for the world's salvation; for the sake of Our Blessed Lord, the King of Lowliness. Amen.

OUR OWN.

Every man takes a childish pride in whatever is his own, whether the possession be material or spiritual; the words "Mine," and "My own," are constantly on the lips of most of us. Yet no words, that we ever use, are more devoid of real meaning; for nothing is our own: everything is only lent to us, that we may learn to give it away. It is painful to us to begin to realize this; for most of us are greedy of whatever we prize most: but when we have learnt to give up cheerfully, there is no greater joy in the world. Setting our heart on things brings us many unnecessary sorrows; and the life that is choked with materiality, leaves little room for the spirit's expansion. We may only legitimately have God and Heaven; and the more we spread them abroad the more we are possessed by them.

TEACH us, dear God, that the less we cling to earthly things, the more we may become attached to heavenly things; for His sake, Whose life on earth was the Perfect Sacrifice. Amen.

ANGELS.

Holy Spirits are ever with us; and we may invoke their aid whenever an undesired thought assails us. Many say that they have never seen Angels, and that, therefore, they do not believe in their existence. They do not see Angels, because they go through life with their spirit's eyes closed. Their limited and partial view of spiritual things is through the thick and ugly veil of self-heavily embroidered with prejudice. If they would rend and cast off the veil, and open their eyes, they might see the Father of Spirits, the Angel of Pain (the cherisher of their graces), and the Angel of Sorrow (the fosterer of holiness), who are ever with them; and they might see and love the Angel of Joy, who never leaves them for a moment, but is helping them, day-long and night-long, to carry their crosses; and they might dwell with the Spirit of our Blessed Lord Jesus, Who, from moment to moment, translates the august Word of the Divine Majesty into the simple speech of Humanity. Each new perception of man's increases God's sway, and intensifies God's power to reveal the Unseen to man.

DEAR God, who knowest that our self wants no sight of the Spiritual, but that our unself desires to see Thee, the Father of Spirits, and the holy spirits, that are Thine, open our eyes that we may see our invisible companions, and walk with them in white; for our Blessed Lord's sake. Amen.

DEAR TO GOD.

We are apt to exaggerate our own importance to the world, by thinking that we are indispensable to each other; but what we should dwell upon is, the dear fact of each soul's being infinitely precious and requisite to God, and of the intensest interest to Him. Pondering on this would give to our Destiny an august dignity and a profound significance; and we should thereby

cease to be the agitated minions of other men's moods, and the dissatisfied fulfillers of an apparently dark and uncertain Fate. Our life and our love are owed primarily to Almighty God, and only secondarily to mankind. We may thankfully learn more and more of the Fatherhood of God, for Blessed Jesus came to teach us of it; yet, sometimes, we allow our difficulty of concept to rise up between that knowledge and ourselves, so that we expend all our love, and our powers of attachment, on domestic or on amorous satisfactions. If we were to repeat the affirmation: "I am owed to God," continually, we might learn how dearly we belong to Him—with the inevitable result of life-transformation.

DRAW us to Thee, O Lover of Souls, by giving us the knowledge of Thine urgent and imperative need of all men's love, and of how Thou sufferest from the lack of our loyal devotion. Amen.

FRAGMENTS OF THE CROSS.

Some of the religions of the world revere the supposed fragments of the Cross, upon which the Redeemer was crucified; and the other religions mock their credulity, and say that those supposed fragments would, if collected, fill a city. But the mockers need not profane the symbolical reverence; for the influence of the Spirit of the Cross well-nigh fills the world. Few human beings, who have heard of the Lord Jesus, have escaped His influence, whether they recognise it or not; for it has been a wind from the East, that has blown through the open windows of the West, and has refreshed the greater part of mankind.

FILL us, O Desire of Nations, with true reverence for Thine eternal work of universal mercy, that we may spread, by holy and sacrificial living, the merits of Thine adorable Passion. Amen.

LOVING ONE ANOTHER.

Learning to love is the work of a lifetime. A man's earlier, and carnal impulse is to love personally, where there are beauty, charm, grace, intellect, or affinity ; his later, and spiritual impulse is to love impersonally, where there are unprepossessiveness, deficiencies, or antagonisms. If he will rise up from the pleasaunce of earlier love, and come into the Divine Realization of later love, he will find that he has lost nothing, but gained everything ; for he loves as God loves, with the love of strong mercy, the selfless love, the universal love. Every man should realize that what he thinks is love may be only a self-gratification. The secret of the later and true love is, loving-in-God—loving^g in and through God only.

HELP us, O our True Lover, never to seek to draw love to ourselves, but ever to turn souls to Thee ; and let us meet our affinities in Thee ; for His sake, Who came to teach us how to love. Amen.

GOD'S KINDNESS.

The inestimable sum of the world's distress is well known to God, in all its details of pain, anguish, loss, terror and sorrow. Our idea of kindness is to save those, whom we love, from all suffering ; but God's love is vaster and more profound than ours ; and He made us because he loved us ; and placed us here, among trials and temptations, to make us worthy for Himself. When we look through, in any silence, to Paradise, and see those, the Eternally Dear and Blessed, we know that how they have attained to walking with their Lord in white, is through their having endured tribulation, and having overcome sin and sorrow. When we see them there, looking upon us with unutterably loving sympathy, we realise the high purpose of God in our perfecting ; and we respond to their gracious interest with joyful and keen endeavour.

WE thank Thee, Father of Love, for the tribulations that are our path to Paradise. Amen.

INDIVISIBILITY.

As the earth, the moon, and the sun can only act fully in conjunction with one another, so man's body, soul, and spirit need to act interdependently on one another, to obtain fulness of life. It would be of real help to us if we could realize that, in our earth-life, body soul and spirit are indivisible, and that the flesh needs the vitalizing of the soul and the directing of the spirit. It is the dividing of flesh and spirit that makes the warfare between them; and our most poignant needs for repentance come from this wilful severance. We should seek so to live, that our spiritual body, in the next life, is not hampered by the sins of our material body, in this life. If we make the spirit the true Informer of our being, and act only according to its high promptings, we shall be helped, and not deterred, by our soul and body, on the heavenward way.

HELP us, O our Kind Creator, to understand our true being, and to realise our union with Thee, through Thy holy gift of Thy Spirit in our spirit, that so we may live entirely unto Thee. Amen.

MIRRORS.

Some folk have mirrors set in their rooms, so that they may cultivate an appearance and manner pleasing to themselves. Other folk have mirrors set, so that they may forget themselves, and the fact of their being in a room—the mirrors flashing the outside life of heaven and earth, reflected in them. Let us set our mirrors, so that they may reflect the Life of our Blessed Lord, and the lives of all the Holy; that the world we dwell in may be peopled with grace and courage, salvation and strength, mercy and pitifulness.

O LIGHT of Light, breaking on the soul's mirror of Reality, fling Thy tender colours on the wondering gaze of the world. Amen.

THE ELEVATION OF THE HOST.

Blessed Jesus prayed: "Give us this day our daily bread;" in order that we may not disdain material life; and He washed men's feet, and fed the hungry multitudes; in order that dazzling spirit need never feel itself to be stained by its human body; but may strive to lift the body to its passionate purity. The Son of Man came, eating and drinking, playing with children, and holding women dear; sharing in all life's varied earth-experience, loving sweet laughter, and shedding the mourner's tear; in order to teach us that the saint need not be a recluse: nor the baptist dwell in the desert: nor the redeemer lash himself in a cell: nor the healer outwear himself with fasting: nor the saviour preach from some pillar in the upper air.

HELP us, O our wise Creator, continually to elevate the common things of life, that Thy grace may evermore transmute the material into the spiritual: for His sake, Who was body of our body, and spirit of Thy Spirit Amen.

CHEERFULNESS.

If we complain of the trials that are meant to bring our lives into conformity with the life of Christ, we prove ourselves unworthy of His holy fellowship; therefore let us continually remind ourselves that they, who murmur at inconvenience or discomfort, cannot become followers of the Crucified. The only remedy for discontent is to cultivate the habit of blessing God, which will remove the temptation to cavil at His will, and will bring the mind into habitual peace. When we are inclined to be sorry for ourselves, we should ponder on the lives and deaths of the Saints, or think reverently

upon those who have suffered in defence of their country; and we should try to comfort those, who are in real trouble. We shall feel remorseful in the next life, if we need to realize how regrettable our attitude to life, here, has been, through our not having grasped the intrinsic importance of the joyful duty of thankfulness. Instead of murmuring at our own lot, let us try to make nobler the attitude of others to their lot; and to alleviate the sufferings of those, whose circumstances are harder than our own are. It is well to learn to discriminate as to which of our circumstances are the loving discipline of our Father, and which are legitimately subject to amelioration. Resignation to the inevitable trials of life is not a sufficient sacrifice of our wills to God; there must be cheerful acceptance of His Holy Will. Our great aim should be to spread Heaven, the good Heaven that joyfully bestows itself on earth, in whatever degree earth will make room for it. But let us be careful to avoid the unthinking cheerfulness that, to the afflicted, may appear to be irreverence for the deep tragedies of human existence.

MAY we constantly pray, as Jesus did, to be enabled to do Thy Holy Will, O our Father. Amen.

THE NIGHT WATCH.

Whenever we awake in the night, let us at once recollect that God is present with us, and that we, by our loving prayers, may share in His great Vigil with all sorrowful night-watchers—comforting mourners, relieving the pain-stricken, guarding the innocent, seeking the lost, and restoring the penitent. Let us thank God for His secret and holy place of the Night, where righteousness and peace can be inseparable companions. He, Who has ordained the darkness for man's rest and refreshment, has also peopled it with the angels of silence and withdrawal: and He fills it with holy vision and sacred sound, for the seeing eye and the hearing ear.

O GOD, Who, wherever Thou appearest, drawest us to Thyself, come to us in all night-waking, that it may be as holy to us as the hour of our birth, or as the hour of our death; for His sake, Who has bidden us watch. Amen.

THE NAILING TO THE CROSS.

No man can come into the fulness of the Kingdom of God, except by the nailing to the Cross. His baptism (by the water of grace, or by the fire of affliction) is only His entrance into the spiritual life. He must travel through his working and learning years, until he comes to the place of the Passion, there to be crucified. Deep in his heart of hearts every man knows that this must be: for has not the Shadow of the Cross fallen upon him in every strong sunlight—the shadow of his own looming cross, of the world cross, or of the Cross of the Redeemer? Verily, he knows that the Cross must come; but he knows not how nor where; nor who will nail him to it. Sometimes, his cross is made from the wood of the joy that once sprang so green and gay within him, from which the mysterious life-sap is gone, that the tree may be used for its stupendous honour and eternal glory—the being fashioned into the Cross. No man indeed knows whose hands will nail him to his cross: it may be the loving hands of his true friends, in the strict and sweet disciplining of holy affection; it may be the hands of those who have loved him, and have grown cruel or estranged; it may be the hands of his enemies; or it may be (O strangest of dolours!) the Hand of Almighty God, as He takes away the man's best-beloved from his yearning side into Paradise. The how, and the where, and the by-whom matter not: only the Central Fact of the Crucifixion matters, as they will joyfully tell you, who, yet living this life of visibility, have endured the weight of the Cross, and the agony of crucifixion; and (Blessed be His Holy Name!) have been buried with Christ, and with Him have arisen,

and ascended into Heaven—yet are left, lovingly, in the visible, for their perfecting, and as a witness to the world—a testimony for the strengthening of the faint-hearted, who are dreading, or trying to avoid, their crucifixion, or who are railing at it, or uttering maledictions upon it.

WE thank Thee, O our True Lover, and Merciful Redeemer, both for Thine adorable Cross, and for our own lesser crosses. Let us so endure our crosses, that we may be Thy living witnesses, and spread the power of Thy Resurrection, for the sake and in the name of the Universal Cross. Amen.

WHEN JESUS COMES.

When Jesus enters our heart, joy overflows our life, as Spring overflows a valley with greenness, making the dry sand of our desert as fruitful as the sand of the riverside. We forget our failures and mistakes, and go joyously forward into the life of new-day, with the new song of the redeemed on our lips. We cease to weep for our own disappointments and sorrows, and only shed the pitiful tears, that wash away the sins and stains of the world, and water the seeds of grace sown by our thankfulness. Our unutterable longing to show souls a way to God finds lawful relief in constant opportunities to impart the holy secret. The characteristics of Jesus become our aspiration, and the attributes of Jesus, our glory; and we work in the sunlight of His presence, and rest in the undefinable peace of His shadow.

COME, O Jesus, into our chastened hearts, and rejoice in our joy of Thee. Amen.

LOST.

Many bewail the things which they are conscious of having lost—health, money, houses, lands, or servants—not realizing that they have lost more

precious things, which neglect has caused to shrink and wither away. They have missed Beauty, through not having developed their sense of it; and Love, because they have not seized the opportunity of service; and they have lost courage, through their soul having shrunk from its conflicts; and they have forgone faithfulness, through their avoidance of sincerity.

HELP us, O Great Giver, to cultivate and develop Thy gifts of character, through Thy gifts of circumstance, for His sake, who came to show man the true values of Life. Amen.

LIGHTING THE LAMPS.

There is never a night when Blessed Jesus is not about lighting the lamp of Faith, in the dark street, and in the dreary and dangerous trench; by a pitying look, an opportune word, a timely letter, the illuminating line of a book; by secret remembrance, by contrite prayer, by sudden fear, by mortal shock, or by mental or physical agony.

LORD, light Thou, by whatever means Thou wilt, the lamp of Faith in our hearts. Amen.

THE DIVINE IMAGE.

He, who cannot see God in his heart, cannot see Him in the universe; and a man may range through all the religions of mankind without finding God through any of them; unless he brings to the intermediary of religion the supreme and inviolate offering of his entire being. God is within man in the same proportion as He is transcendent to man; and there is no man, who has no opportunity of experiencing the transcendence through the way of the immanence. The way to see the Divine Image in the heart is to turn to the heart's Centre, and to gaze upon it in absolute stillness and complete surrender; and then we can mirror whatever

the Divine Face is gazing upon. Looking to Jesus, our Divinity, with our whole and undivided humanity, is the only way of coming into constant touch with God, which alone can dignify our earthly existence.

O FATHER of Jesus, and Father of all mankind, enable us to find our dear Lord in our hearts, that, through Him, we may learn of Thee evermore. Amen.

FISHERS OF MEN.

None of those, who have heard the Divine Call, can become real fishers of men, unless they are prepared to weave their net of the sun-bright meshes of humanness, and to set their heart to the one great gladness of casting it, whichever way they turn, at any hour of the day or the night. Only the strands of faith, hope, and love can be woven into those inescapable meshes; and the fisher's soul must be able to project itself into the souls of those for whom he is fishing; so that he feels their miseries, shares their sorrows, weeps for their sins, mourns their forgotten vows, and hates the sullen shames, that eat away their secret source of life. Unless he can bathe in the deep fountains of their laughter and tears, he can never hope to win souls for his Divine Master, the Fisher of Mankind.

O THOU, Who art the Everlasting Counsellor, give us Thy manifold gift of understanding. Amen.

TRUE LOVE.

Many are exercised by what they consider to be an excess of love, meaning thereby a selfish obsession for some fellow-being, who is peculiarly attractive to them. But, if they are willing to learn, they will find that their pent emotion can be directed into the channel of the passion for humanity, and can thence reach the Goal of the Ocean of God; and that the universally loving heart is not only the spring of tenderness, but the

quickener of intelligence. They will gradually realize that personal love is fruitless, unless it leads to the passionate love of all souls; and that the universal lover is blessed both by those, who inspire him, and by those, on whom he bestows his love.

O OUR Belovéd Brother and Comrade, teach us the Divine Method, that we may shorten our pilgrimage by avoiding the way of the world, and its death-wisdom of expediency and selfness. Amen.

THE INFINITE LIFE.

Though the universe is but a grain in the Hand of God, a room may contain the Infinite, and a temple may be brimmed with the Divinity. For the Spirit of man is of the essence of the Spirit of God, and the infinite in it is in correspondence with the Universal Infinite. The progress of every pilgrim of eternity is made through the Universal Light and Love; and it is through the acts of the spirit that man's whole nature is transformed. Constancy and courage cannot exist without adversity and trial; and every form of sacrifice intensifies the life of the spirit of man in divineness. Sorrow and suffering are the means of life's ennoblement, for they are man's part in the sacred Labour of God, and his share in the eternal Divine Travailing. It is to the liberation of the life of the spirit that all the life of the body should tend.

AS Thou, O Body of Jesus, savest our body; so do Thou, O Spirit of Jesus, sanctify our spirit; that we may be more and more blent with the Eternal Infinite, Who is Our Father. Amen.

THE CLOUD.

Insanity is the darkest of human tragedies; and any human explanation of it is impossible. But we may be justified in claiming, and in believing that God,

Who made a mind, and has broken it, can and will also re-make it; and that, though the beautiful body and soul may be rent and distraught, the Spirit, which is of His own essence, is not, and cannot be touched with the human infirmity; but, when freed from the broken body and soul, may, in another life, be perfect and complete, as it came from Him, in the beginning. We realize so little, while body, soul, and spirit are "whole," and are acting in the unity of their trinity, that it is spirit, which is the essential part, that nothing can impair or destroy. The more a life is able to function from spirit, the more sure it may be of spirit's transcendence, and of its continuity; and the more a life allows spirit to direct soul and body, the less likely the mortal affliction of insanity is to fall upon it.

HAVE mercy, O Lord, upon all, who are in mental affliction; and restore them in Thine own way and time; and comfort and relieve both mortal sufferers and those who love and tend them. Amen.

THE WAY OF RETURN.

There are few souls, that have not needed, painfully and mournfully, to seek the Way of Return to God. But after the first few steps of the Way, Our Father turns the road into a joyous pilgrimage, no matter what agonies of repentance, what expiatory penance, what self-mortifications of contrition are our necessary portion. For we are returning to the One, Who loves us more than any other loves us, and Who has loved us enough to care to withdraw us, from our sins and our temptations to Himself again. And we need have no fear as to the reality of our love to Him; for if it had not been real, we should not have been able to rise up from our pleasaunces, and come away, on hearing His dear and merciful call. He, Who implanted divine love and response in our hearts, causes the love (when once we have realized its existence) to increase with

each new effort of the restored and joyous soul. The penitent need not dread the whirlwind of allurements, nor the sandstorm of resistance; for God, Who has appointed the Way of Return, has provided grace, whereby these may be duly countervailed, when they arise from the abysses of the mind and the recesses of the soul.

O FATHER, O Son, O Holy Spirit, Thou Triune Watcher of the Way of Return, lead us faithfully and steadily and joyously again to Thee, Our Loving Redeemer. Amen.

CHARACTER.

The breadth of a man's influence is the height of his character; therefore, let every man hold himself to his full height, though, sometimes, it may strain his power of effort to carry himself well. Invincibly persuaded of his God, let him stand, never wavering, and never sheltering beneath the stature of a sterner soul. Let him tower above the cringing mass of his tendencies, and above the weltering flood of his temptations. Let him ally his native powers, unconquerably, with the overwhelming majesty of God. There is no mournfulness about men's isolated, island destinies, if we remember that each man's life may be a port of call to passing adventurers, and that, eventually, the little human life is merged in the great Divine Life.

GIVE us, O our Righteous Redeemer, the abiding sense of Thee, that can alone give us character.

THE GRACIOUS.

Men would go habited in grace, did they realize that they were the Royal Children of the Lord of Immensity; and every life would be a guest-house for the sacred use of the King of all Kings, Who is always afoot. And, no man would be a niggard; for the

gracious are generous ; but every man would set about paying some prisoner's ransom, whether with time, or forbearance, or life-blood. The gracious are ever possessed by patience, which is the highest form of dignity ; and they are upheld by the habit of prayer, which is as magical as water, and as mystical as fire. They cultivate pity, mercy, and charity, for Divine Beauty's sake ; and the brightness of the halo of God is wrought of their triumphs.

O GIVER of Grace, bestow upon us the grace of light, fire, wind, and water, for the Holy Ghost's sake. Amen.

CLEANNESS.

The clean mind cleanses whatever it touches ; therefore let us travel, clean, on every path, loving men, and praising God, Who has implanted in us the love of sweet austerity. The only way to be clean is to divest ourselves of every encumbrance, to strip ourselves of opinions, rights, dues, ceremonies ; and to plunge, naked, into the holy and ever-flowing stream of Renunciation, over which the Dove never ceases to brood. From the further bank of the stream, we shall be able to look quietly and unregretfully on all that we have left behind, because of the piercing joy, which coming into touch with God, through Renunciation, gives us. The clean heart purifies all affection, and is as dew upon the hot, the restless, the self-seeking hearts, with which it comes into contact. It neither desires, nor gives, either adulation, or extravagant love-expression ; it is ardent, open, sincere. It neither receives, nor offers, the comfort that is pandering ; but it accepts and bestows the comfort that is strong help. It lifts all trouble to the Highest Source of Help, and is glad to be directed, and to direct, by and from that Divine Source. It never magnifies vexations and griefs into sorrows ; nor mental or physical pains into

a conscious martyrdom. It loves, as Almighty God loves, greatly, by refusal and denial. Every soul, that is clean, occupies itself in seeking, and leading, other souls to the baptismal waters ; for it cherishes no secret and self-righteous joy of its own whiteness ; but rejoices tenfold in others' cleanness.

CLEANSE us, dear Lord, by the waters of Thy Grace, as our sweet Saviour was baptised in Jordan by John. Amen.

BEHOLD, I STAND AT THE DOOR,
AND KNOCK: IF ANY MAN HEAR
MY VOICE, AND OPEN THE DOOR,
I WILL COME IN TO HIM.

My sisters, and my brothers, it is Almighty God Who ~~is~~ speaking these stupendous words to the hearts of all of us. He has many ways of speaking to our hearts, as many ways as there are hearts in the world ; and he has every conceivable and inconceivable way of knocking. No man can tell how God may knock at another man's heart ; he can only know how God knocks at his own heart. None of us can fail to hear the knocking at our own hearts ; whether by day or by night ; in waking or in sleeping ; in suffering or in rejoicing ; in toiling or in resting ; in fighting or in peacemaking. The knocking never ceases, until the heart begins to listen, and advances to open its door to the Heavenly Suppliant. Then there is a great stillness in earth and in heaven ; and out of the stillness comes the Voice that is from Everlasting to Everlasting. The Divine Voice opens the secret chambers of the heart, so that all the pent love and aspiration, that the heart is capable of, may escape, and offer themselves to the Gracious Comer-In, in perpetual adoration of living joy and devoted service. Let us pause, my sisters, and my

brothers, and listen for the gentle, insistent knocking—the knocking, which may be pain, loss, sorrow, sickness, tribulation, separation, or death; or which may be comfort, restoration, joy, health, quietness, re-union, or life; according to the need of the individual heart. With some of us the doorway is choked up by the lust of the flesh, the pride of pleasure, the glitter of riches, the lure of the world, or the lumber of indifference; so that we cannot open the door at once, and are so long about it, that we wonder whether it is worth while, and, finally, lapse into unconsciousness of the knocking. So the sooner we begin to clear the doorway, the better; for why should Almighty God need to stand without the door of the heart of mortal man? If any hear the knocking, yet desire assurance of the Nature of the Visitant, let them look through the windows of their hearts upon the faces of such passers-by as have opened their hearts' doors; or let them cry out, and ask such pilgrims, how it has been with them since the entering of the King of all Kings into their hearts; and they will not fail of the Answer of Salvation. My sisters, and my brothers, I heard the knocking, in one way after another, all my life; and, every time, I said: "I will open the door;" and I rose up to open it; but, every time, the giant of Self rose up too, and barred my way to the door. So, at last, I cried to the Knocker that I had tried by all means to slay the giant and could not. And the Merciful Voice Without called to me: "Only the keen sword of Renunciation of the Will can slay him!" So I went back into my heart's armour-room, and, underneath all my common-use weapons, I found the amazing sword; and I took it, unfearfully, and slew my hindrance. And I can testify to you that He Who Comes in, when the door is opened, abides in the heart for ever, and Himself keeps the doorway against all unworthy comers-after; and that, where He enters in, there is no penury, no pain, no separation, nor anguish; there is no sound of weeping; there is not even any death; for the Comer-in and the heart itself become One.

OFFERING PRAYER.

Gracious and Merciful Lord, I have many times heard Thy knocking; and I hear it fatefully now. I am irresistibly drawn; I run; I strain to open the door. Do Thou, O my Deliverer, press from without. Lord, dear Lord, the door opens . . . I am Thine, eternally Thine, thankfully Thine—the servant of Thy Blessed Importunity, the minister of Thine Inexpressible Grace. Use me, O use me, for the salvation of unawakened hearts. Let me go singing Thy song: "Love, Love, Divine Love." along all the ways of the world. Let me grow into the indissoluble union of the saved and the Complete Salvation, for Thy Sake, O All-Father, for Thy sake, O Everyman's Brother, for Thy'sake, O Mysterious Spirit-Weaver-of-God-with-man, Ever-Blessed Trinity, Living and Loving God.

Amen and Alleluia!

SAINTHOOD.

Where the heart is given to God, the life is given to Humanity; and the Infinite Mercy writes His Name upon the forehead of every lover of Humanity, and the names star the world's night of desolation. For, every man, who beholds the lives of the saints, either on earth, or in Paradise, has wherewithal to give glory to God. All they, who have fulfilled their joy of the adoration of God, have mounted to it by the holy stair of reverence for humanity. This practice of holiness, this service of humanity, is coincident with any life-occupation; and the doing of any work of love is the learning of the Alphabet of the Book of the Kingdom of Heaven, which learning is always followed by the gentle teaching of it to others. The saints can truly love, because they have ceased to wish to be loved; and because their ardour has crystallised into earnestness, and their passion into service, through their aim of habitual godliness. Obedience is the Amen of saintship;

and joy, its Alleluia. They, whose lives are spent in sweet sacrifices, are the continual remembrancers of the triumph of the Cross of the Redeemer; and their adventure of universal love is crowned with unimaginable glory.

FOR Thine innumerable Holy Witnesses may we thank Thee, Good Lord, by worthily following in their blessed footsteps. Amen.

INSPIRATION.

Inspiration is the voice of God, that visits the lover of His silences; therefore, let us pause, and listen, in the sweet stillness of the quiet heart and the closed eye, where the angels walk. Let us seek and develop whatever intensifies our ardour for the realisation of the Divine Presence. To those, who love holy silence, the actuality of Blessed Vision is granted. Holy silence, which is the Peace of God, may exist among the many conflicting noises of the world; and, where one man is unconscious of mystery, another man sees the Holy Rose, and is enrapt by its utter fragrance. Every supernatural vision, which takes form, from the Infinite, before our eyes, is a new responsibility; for no one may be with the Lord, or with His Saints, without expressing his thankfulness, by seeking to further the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. He, who has seen the Holy and Kind Face in the Golden Cloud, spends his life in trying to bring others where they may see it; and he, to whom the All-Pervading is an ever-present Reality, imparts His love to his fellow-beings.

COME, O our glory, in continuous revelation, that we may evermore grow to Thy Light, and into Thy likeness. Come, as the morning, in strength and light; come, as the noon, in fulness; come, as the evening, in completeness; and come, as the night, in peace; come, O God, Come! Amen.

ACTS OF FAITH.

All of man's acts should be symbols of his spirit, and not unconscious coinings of the trend of his lower nature. Man can only make his acts beautifully symbolical of his higher nature, and of his true character, by making them all acts of faith ; that is, his religion must be absolutely inseparable from his life.

OUR Unfailing Inspirer, may we ever act in union with Thee, the Eternal and Holy Spirit, that our life may be one act of adoration. Amen.

MAKING READY.

God gives Himself to us according to our capacity of receiving Him ; therefore let us get rid of *self*, our great obsession. Let us widen our lives by the love of humanity, and by the development of our Divine gifts, in the divine use ; that God may be enabled to come to us, and abide in us. We look with envy on the God-possessed and the God possessing ; yet we are too lazy and too careless to try to learn the sweet secret of their beautiful and attractive lives. If we ask ourselves what we are living for, and what our true aim is, in all earnestness, God will show us that it is the glorification of self, and will help us to cast out self. Whenever self is cast out, in any degree, the Spirit of God correspondingly enters into us. Our time is so short, and our need is so great, that it is well worth while to begin at once to make ready for the indwelling of God, that our opportunities and experiences may not be wasted, nor our life return to Him void. We do not like our little trivial works to be wasted ; and God, in Whose Image we are created, is sorrowful when a soul needs to return to Him, through the gate of Death, for complete re-creation.

GIVER of Life, give us also the divine method of preparing for Thine Indwelling. Amen.

GOD'S CALL TO MAN.

Most men, as soon as adversity falls upon them, flee to their friends, or even to strangers, for help in their physical or spiritual necessity, thus wronging the Loving Heart of Jesus, their Divine Friend. They need not wonder that their woes are inconsolable, and their pains unendurable, while they are seeking support and consolation anywhere but where they are to be found. They do not realize that the particular event or circumstance, against which they seek affectionate redress, is God's special method of drawing them to Himself; and, at each of His austere and sweet calls, they flee from Him still further, until some terrific chastisement, or some appalling desolation, shows them the emptiness of the whole world of living beings, so far as their isolation of misery is concerned; and into that vast bare universe the tremendous glory of God streams. Then they understand His method, at last, and cast themselves into His merciful arms.

MAKE us responsive to every call of Thine, that we may not distress Thee by needing the painful method of arousal, O Good Lord. Amen.

FELLOW-DEALING.

Every human being can touch every other human being at some point of experience, or in some trait of character; therefore, no man is free of the due of universal sympathy. It is so easy to fall into a habit of irritation at others' little faults, and at the same time to ignore our own grievous sins; and it is so difficult to respond to all manner of temperaments with equal tolerance, or with human interest. We give way too readily to a pleasant liking of those, who are akin to ourselves in nature, taste, or temperament, or to an adoration of those, who are excitingly and gloriously unlike ourselves, and so possess a magical attraction for us. There is, however, a beautiful mean, in our method

of fellow-dealing, which is neither apathy nor exaggeration, but the divine method of meeting the divine in every human being, by evoking it, through the blessed exercise of the ever-divine, dormant in ourselves.

O DEAR Lord Jesus, Who kept an equal way of sweet and calm dealing, help us to attain unto its practice evermore. Amen.

IN WHITE.

Sometimes we wonder at the whiteness of the robes in which the saints walk through the world, and we marvel that the robes are so little frayed. But, after suffering has cleansed our vision, we know that it is the divine light from the radiant being that makes the robes shine, and that the fabric of the robes is everlasting righteousness.

EVEN here and now, Dear Lord Jesus, let us walk with Thee in white. Amen.

RELIGION.

Religion is the one Way of the Lord. Many hope to arrive by the means of morality ; but morality is not great enough ; for, in it, we trust to ourselves, and, consequently fall ; whereas, in religion we trust in God, and are held upright. We learn, by experience, that morality is comprised in religion. Yet we must not forget that Religion is not an end in itself, but only the way of the soul to God. Many mistake a vain sentimentality for religion, and expend the priceless treasure of the power of adoration on the symbol, instead of on the significance. If we begin our religious life, by clinging to the Breast of the Divine, in the faithful simplicity of Bethlehem, the Divine Hand will lead us through the multiform sorrows and endurings of Calvary into the joy of the Resurrection Garden, and into eventual Ascension into Heaven. It is the livingness

of Religion that avails; unless Religion is experimental and practical, it will shrivel and fall and die into dust. We can only truly live unto God by trying to help those who do not want to be helped, to come to Him, and to cure those, who do not know that they are sick, and to lift souls from static dogma into growing faith. Our Religion must be the filling in of God's Design of our lives; and, in trying to make the picture beautiful, we do not only gratify our sense of fitness, but we magnify our Designer.

O LORD, our Righteousness, make our lives inseparable from our Religion; and make our Religion the outcome of Thine Eternal Truth. Amen.

THE CRUCIFIX.

He, who kneels before the Crucifix at morn, is blessed by the extended Hands; and he, who bends before the Crucifix at night, is lifted by the Loving Arms from earth to Heaven. The Crucifix is also the hallowed symbol of our own lowly sacrifice; the pious evidencing of our entire submission to the redemptive leading of Kind Inevitability on the Holy Way of Discipline. Blessed be our Divine Forethinker, that He has made it man's happy doom to labour beneath the Cross by day, and to rest upon it in Heaven by night. When man learns to love the Way of the Passion, he can enter into the joys of Jesus, in doing the Father's Holy Will; for the life of the Man of Sorrows and the life of the Lord of Glory are one.

TEACH us, O Righteous Parent, that it is the willingness to be crucified that is the Cross's great avail. Amen.

CENSORIOUSNESS.

Let us strive to cease entirely from censoriousness, not only that we may mortify the self in us, but that the blighting shadow of our censure may not fall upon other

men, and retard their development. Let us forget every man's failures, in encouraging his endeavours, and in anticipating his possibilities; it will be easy to do this, if we accustom ourselves to remember the Divine Origin of all men. We should impress upon ourselves that no man's sins are worse than our own are; for each man sins according to his temperament and tendencies; and we should habituate ourselves to realize that all men's souls are of equal value to God; and that God is drawing each soul to Himself by the special path necessary for its development.

HELP us, O our Father, to love each other, as Jesus loves us, pitifully, mercifully, and entirely selflessly, for His Loving Sake. Amen.

ACCIDENT?

Many a shepherd thwarts man, with an invisible crook from the skies; so that man often looks back thankfully on circumstances of known, or of undreamed of peril, and sees that, but for the shining of the sun, the falling of the rain, the swelling of a stream at his feet, the bursting of his house into flame, or the intervention of an avalanche, he might have been the victim of either physical or spiritual death. He, who becomes conscious of the crook, can turn all feeling into beneficial experience and every circumstance and happening into the development of character.

O THOU, Who hast said: "I will set up shepherds over them:" and hast bidden us look to our Shepherd; bring us ever to Thee again, as a shepherd brings his flock; for the Good Shepherd's sake. Amen.

GIVING.

Many are content to give what they can afford; but few are anxious to give what they cannot afford; that is, to deprive themselves of what life considers to

be necessities, for the Kingdom of Heaven's sake. It has not occurred to them to square what they give with what they have received ; and they are not ashamed to be ungrateful pensioners of the Divine Bounty. They take it for granted that they deserve to be rich, happy, comfortable, or beloved, until some appalling sorrow awakens them to Reality. Then they find that nothing is their own, until they have given it to God ; that every gift is a wave from the ocean of God into which it must return. All hallowed sacrifice is an honour that man owes to life ; and nothing that is given is lost ; for few gains are greater than the holy habit of generosity ; and he is best loved, who desires no embrace, but the arms of the Cross. Often the greater a man's possessions are, the greater also his dissatisfactions are ; and the lust of possessing grows stronger with every acquisition. The measure of giving is the measure of peace ; and it is the emptied heart that has room for God. We must learn to give not only our possessions, but ourselves, if we would have spiritual health ; for the commonest life-disease is due to inexpansiveness, and the surest life-cure is obtained by universal self-diffusion. The flame of passionate adoration can only be fed by holy self-denial and joyful self-giving—the self-giving that can overflow the world.

TAKE from us, O Merciful Lord, all that we are unwilling to give, that we may neither crave, nor have, aught but Thyself. Amen.

THE STREET OF THE FOUNTAINS.

The street of the fountains is the most beautiful of all streets ; and it is accessible from everywhere. All manner of streets lead into it—mean, and spacious streets ; straight, and crooked streets ; level, and hilly streets ; reputable, and disreputable streets. Throughout its entire length there are fountains playing—fountains of various shapes and sizes ; and the more

simple the fountain, the more beautiful its waters appear. The sight of any of the fountains is able to cleanse a man, body and soul, and to assuage his thirst—so potent are the wondrous waters. The names of some of the fountains are : Religion, Art, Sorrow, Affliction, Joy, Labour, and Love.

O THOU, Who art the Uncreated Water of Life, draw all souls to the Divine Source. Amen.

LEARNING.

All our life long, we are being taught the Holy Mysteries of the Divine Life within ; step by step, we are led into true knowledge. As, in our childhood, Jesus taught us of God, so, in later life, God teaches us of the mystery of our Living and Everlasting Lord, Who was the man, Christ Jesus. We find that the dwelling-place of the Lord is in the heart of man ; and that, if the soul goes to its Centre, there it finds the Image of God. The belief that Holy Jesus is the unique manifestation in Time of the Absolute, is the supernal triumph that transfigures all human effort, and knits human life to the life of our Dear and Incomprehensible God. If we think that we know everything, we become static, and our hearts become closed to Continuous Revelation ; but if we keep our souls open, we are brimmed with ever-new life, and grow ever towards the Eternal Light.

MAY every circumstance of life teach our willing souls of Thee, O our Guide. Amen.

VENTURES.

They, who live for appearance ; they, who marry for money ; and they, who work for fame, make poor ventures. The bravest hazard, that a man can make, is to cast his love upon the winds, without forethought, and without expectation. To him, who adventures all,

desiring nothing in return, the waves of life, in tempest, or in calm, sometimes sweep in the glory of the Universe.

MAY we, O God, ever give the utmost for the highest, and be always willing to risk all for the hope of salvation; for His sake, Who, uncreated, adventured into creation for the ultimate hope of man. Amen.

INTERCESSIONS.

We know that the Redeemed are ever praying for us; but they are not praying God to take away our sorrows, our pains, and our adversities; they are asking Him to help us to bear them bravely, that we may gain the courageous spirit, the desirable attitude, to them, that is our peace, and their sympathetic delight. For what we learn by suffering, and through remedial anguish, is an intense and endless joy to Our Lord and all the Blessed. Our tears of penitence, and of pity for humanity, are bright waters, flowing to Paradise, to make glad the City of God; and the prayers of the Holy in Paradise for us are bright rains of divine grace upon our arid lives, causing them to blossom into triumphant gratitude. At one time, hope comes to us; at another time, faith; at another time, patience, forgiveness, capability, or physical energy; and, with the gift, the knowledge flashes upon us that our Brothers of the Sacred Heart or our Sisters of the Divine Compassion have been praying for us in the Paradise of God. Thereupon we enter into and are led onward in the Divine Mystery of the Holy Fellowship of the Lord's dear lovers, who have gone ahead. And we thankfully bless those true lovers and pray for all passed souls, who are yet in their remedial purgation, or are on their merciful probation.

BY the victories of the martyrs; by the virtues of the confessors; by the expiatory grace of all penitents; by the sanctity of holy virgins; by the intercessions of the saints, succour us, O Victorious Lord. Amen.

A PRIVILEGE.

Well may they rejoice in secret--they, who have physical diseases, mental distresses, or spiritual anxieties; for they can lift their eyes from what seems to be disorder and confusion, to perceive the spiritual essence of their trials crystallizing, and taking form in the skies above them; taking form, ever and ever, in the sacred symbol of the Cross. It is only the unfaithful, who despise the Cross, or are ashamed of it, not realizing that it is our Lord's main glory, and that it is our Lord, Who lifts it from the shoulders of men, when they faint, on their way to their Calvary, and bears it, Himself, that they may have a pause for renewal. Crossbearers are as precious as Crusaders, in the sight of the Great Ordainer of the Cross.

O THOU, Who art the appointer of all lives, help us to love our trials; for His sake, Who endured the world-cross. Amen.

TEMPLES.

Any working or sleeping life-place can be a temple, filled with beautiful and holy offerings; or bare, for the flashing of vision upon its walls; and with its windows open to the hundred winds of Heaven. It may be angel-tended, if its door is left ajar for the entrance of the silent messengers of pity and mercy and love in their divine guises of sorrow, affliction and loss, or of comfort, compensation and joy. Life gives man his living rosary of prayers; God gives man the honour of the crucifix; and man gratefully makes the shrines for his temple. No two temples have ever been, or ever can be the same; for each man makes his own sacrificial altar, and the thankful gifts, which he places upon it.

VISIT, O Lord, the temple of every loving heart, that prayer and praise and labour may be one. Amen.

POSITION.

People are content to sacrifice the great things of life for one of the smallest things—position: that, in which they happen to be born; that, which they have arduously acquired, through choice; or that, to which they aspire. They carefully thrust aside the beautiful opportunities, which await them outside the bounds of position; they are only generous, friendly, and sociable to people in their own position, and they eat, dress, marry, die, and are buried, according to their position. Some obtain redemption from their exclusiveness, by a merciful accident; and a few obtain sudden salvation from it, by overmastering love. Any man may well strive that he may flow from the bounds of his position into the glorious freedom of universal humanity.

GIVE us, O Father of the race, no dignity but that of our eternal sonship; and may we ever remember that we are the sisters and brothers of Mary and Jesus; for the sake of the Lowly, Whom Thou hast magnified. Amen.

TO MOURNERS.

It is well that the mourner should evermore ponder on the joyful mysteries of our Lord's Resurrection and Ascension; and through them, on his beloved's resurrection and ascension. He should not fix his thoughts on the remembrance of the death-passion of his beloved, but on the ensuing glory of his beloved's spirit-life in God. If, in the freshness of his anguish, he cannot help dwelling on the torturing memory, let him try at the same time to realize that all pain and sorrow detach the soul from the world, and intensify the sense of the Real. Shrouded days and unrestful nights contain within their strange discipline the jewels of God's, and our own forthcoming joys, which, when we realize, we see that God's own multiform manner of dealing with man is the right method for each individual soul. In time, the

mourner realizes not only the resurrection and ascension of his beloved, but of the whole race of mankind, in one gradual and unending magnificence of wonder, in every phase of life, both here and beyond the grave.

WE thank Thee, O our comfort and joy, for the relief of Thy solacing, whereby we may assure the sorrow stricken of Thine unfailing love. Amen.

HARDEN NOT YOUR HEARTS.

Many go through life without making any attempt to bless others, and without even the wish to bless, thus affording no revelation of the All-Father to their fellow beings. Let every man strive to uncover the Divine Image in his heart, that it may shine through every word and act, with the radiant graciousness of his Holy Parentage, for the cheering, and renewing, and strong comforting of all with whom he has to do.

O Ever Blessed, and Ever Blessing, let man so develop his heart, that he may sustain the world by beauty and serviceableness, for His sake, Who is each man's Holy Indwelling Benefactor. Amen.

GRACES.

The loveliest graces spring from discipline; and with what thankfulness we shall look back upon the adversities, that were our preparation for the cross. Discipline is the jealous guardian of holiness—that mysterious fountain of heavenly grace, which is never spent in any drought. If we confess Christ, our whole life must be beautiful, so that others may desire Him and His redeeming grace. We must shed around us the tranquility of innocence and the peace of self-denial, if we would convince men of God. Many lives are vulgarized by the lack of reverence, men not being ashamed to complain of discomfort and inconvenience, in

the presence of the honour of the crucified; but, if the irreverent remembered, that, whenever they saw sorrow and pain, they were standing by the cross of Christ, deep veneration would possess them, and, in time, would teach them the gentleness, that could transform their lives. The most characteristic grace of a Christian is simplicity—was not the Redeemer born in a manger, of the lowliest of women?—the simplicity, that is true wisdom, and guides man in safety through any entanglement.

GIVE us, Blessed Jesus, the gravity of simplicity, the gaiety of responsiveness, the dignity of sincerity, and the majesty of righteousness. Amen.

TO PENITENTS.

O all you, who are bewailing your sins, and fearing the storm of temptation, take courage; for out of the very depths peace comes, and through temptation strength is engendered. Remember that God is always with you, and that he will give your tempest-tossed spirit rest in some sublime idea, and activity in some holy aim, if you will accept His one eternal condition—the entire forsaking, by body, soul, and spirit, of all that was, however remotely, the cause of your lamentable secret lapse, or of your notorious open fall. To realise and to admit that you have sinned, and to feel earnest contrition, will not bring you peace, until you respond to the forgiving Love of God with every fibre of your nature. It is the energizing Reality of Love—God's Love for us and our love for Him, that saves and restores us; and may we abide in these loves for ever, learning, through their grace, how to love our fellowmen, and bring them also into the bound of the Divine Love. There is no greater ecstasy in life than to be allowed to arouse, and kindle, and energise some sleeping soul with the Divine Fire.

O SAVIOUR of the World, may all, who are redeemed by Thee, image Thee, in body, soul, and spirit, both for Thy delight, and for the drawing of impenitent souls to Thee, our Merciful and Patient God. Amen.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME.

Let us learn, my sisters and brothers, of the grace of God, not only to seek to receive forgiveness and help through the sacrifice of our Blessed Lord in the Living Sacrament, but to strive hourly to make our sacrifice *with* Christ, by giving our thought, time, and money, nay, our whole life, for the loving worship of God, and for the succouring of mankind. Our true and only sacrifice is ~~the~~ incessant sacrifice of *self* on the ever prepared altar of humanity. Every time that we eat the holy bread, we faithfully pledge ourselves to the utmost simplicity of living (for His sake, Who was a willing wanderer over the country-sides and in the streets of the cities); to the common brotherhood of humanity (realized through the mystical understanding of the Fatherhood of the Universal Creator); to labours of mercy; and to the sanctifying, by love, of the hourly necessities of life. And every time that we drink the holy Wine, we are solemnly pledging ourselves to drink willingly of our dear Lord's cup of world-sorrow—which means that we promise to lift the burdens of those with whom we come into contact, and never to try to avoid the sorrows of the race, nor to evade the inherent punishment of our sins, nor to shrink from the universal life-penalty of blessed, disciplinary pain. Through the realizing of the outward meaning of the common symbols of the Bread and the Wine, we are gradually drawn into the mystical holy of holies of their inner meaning, which can only be vouchsafed to us, if we have earnestly and faithfully through our comprehending, and actual living-out of the outer mysteries, in our hourly activities, made ourselves capable of understanding it. The inner

holinesses of the sweet symbols are the mysteries of joyful communion with God, and with those of His Saints in this world, or in the Invisible, who have attained to those inner mysteries, through the habitual practice of the living-out of the outer sacramental mysteries. The chief aid to the living of the Sacramental Life is the having of the One Great Aim—the casting out of self, and thus becoming a channel for God. We know that this is true, because Christ gave *broken* bread, and wine *poured out*—the symbol that His own life was broken and poured out for man; and in token that He would help us to break up our lives for humanity, and henceforward have our wholeness only in Him. As the cross is for evermore the glorious emblem of our evergrowing fellowship with Him, so are the broken bread, and the wine poured forth, the dear remembrancers of the hourly method of our becoming His faithful followers. If we have a lesser aim than the breaking up of our lives for the loving succouring of humanity, and for the giving-place for the livingness of our dear Lord in our hearts, we the more easily satisfy our selfness; but, if we have the One Great Aim, we can pleasure God. If we fall from the Aim, we do not bring it down with us; and God will, on our sincere repentance, lift us up again to it, and keep us there, so long as we are living consciously in His sight, and gladly seeking to know and do His Will. We are, as with all our other privileges, in danger of taking the Blessed Sacrament too much for granted, and without continually *proving* our gratitude; for we forget what its habitual holy observance keeps us from; and how it is our Loving Warden, protecting us against sudden and violent temptation, and restraining us from habitual sin, and defending us in the onslaughts of the destroyers, love of the world, accumulation of money and gear, uncharitableness, censoriousness, unforgivingness, exaggerated speech, magnification of self, or lapses into lust. It is only if we are real ourselves, that we can meet Him, Who is Living Reality; otherwise, we go

from the Sacred Presence inert, lifeless, unchanged, and untransformable. Let us never partake of the Blessed Sacrament without intense longing and ardent prayer for the renewal of the Divine Life in all mankind, that we may be constantly transformed and transforming—dear witnesses to God and man of the unfailing power of the Living Word, the potentiality of the Real Presence of Him, Who momentarily becomes man, that He may continually redeem and sustain all men; Who evermore inhabits a spiritual body, that He may, there-through, perpetually save our physical bodies—the LORD, Who is universally born in the redemptive manger and perpetually sacrificed upon the remedial cross. The first step in the Sacramental life is our irrevocably realizing that we are here, not for our own amusement but for the continuous Manifestation of our Loving Parent, the everlasting Revelation of our Kingly Brother, the true Magnification of our Indwelling Friend—Almighty, All-glorious, Triune God. The profound realizing and carrying out of this elemental principle and living purpose of life will give Adorable and Merciful Reality the opportunity for which He created us, and He will rejoice to live in us (Blessed be His Everlasting and Universal Love!), and to make us the thankful and humble sisters and brothers of our own dear Lord. Amen.

ADOREMUS IN ÆTERNAM SANCTISSIMUM
SACRAMENTUM. Amen and Alleluia.

CROSSES.

Many people spend their lives in suffering unworthily upon paltry and ignoble crosses, which they themselves have made out of the fabric of discontent, vanity, resentment or sensuousness. They go on fashioning their crosses, not realizing what they are doing, till the cross is complete, and then they either self-piteously crucify themselves upon it, or they stumble over it, and

unwillingly lie upon it, being too nerveless to rise. The only salvation for such people, is to free themselves from their self-made crosses and to break them up, and burn them; then, by the light of the burning, they will see the way to the true Calvary, that their loving and merciful God has ordained for them, the Calvary that leads by a covered way to the resplendence of Resurrection, and the beatitude of Ascension.

O THOU, Whose unfailing love has ordained the Inevitable Cross for all mankind, help every man to respond to Thy Divine Method of Perfection; for the sake of the World-Cross-Bearer, our Blessed Lord. Amen.

THE STANDING INVITATION.

Every man has a standing invitation to the greatest of guest-places; and he might even make it his home, if he chose. Very few set out on the way; for the road, the pace, and the bourne are all foreign to them, as they have not visited that guest-place since their childhood. They do not fear that they will not be welcome; but they dislike the effort which is necessary to their setting out; and they have a dread of being lonely on the way. Yet they who travel the road of actuality, at the pace of sincerity, have the incomparable joy of arriving at the bourne of Reality.

O THOU, Who art the Real, lead us evermore from death into Life. Amen.

TRAVELLING.

Man's life is occupied in travelling towards the horizon; and, on his way, he travels through every variety of country. He has a long way to go; for his journey is endless, in this world, or in any other world. The roads, that he must travel by, are broken and pit-beset; and many are the dismal towers and dark forests,

that he passes, in fear lest he be taken prisoner there. He is often lured by siren-cries for help, and, on going to some phantom rescue, he may founder in a quaking mass of evil, or be torn in a thorny brake of sin, or be buffeted by violent winds against a stone wall. So he is often homesick for the Source Whence he came; and he peers, night and day, to the blue-grey hem of the Far World; or he yearns for the beautiful white City of his Dreams, whose mist-hidden gates he believes to be quite near him, and within a few hours' or days' journey. His greatest comfort is to know that the Son of God, too, is travelling for ever through and through the Universe; and to hope and prepare for the day when he shall meet Him, on one or other of the divine tracks.

GIVE us, O Thou Appointer of man's destiny, the consciousness of Thy companionship on all our ways; for the Divine Traveller's sake. Amen.

THE WAR OF THE CROSS.

We have not called the present War a Crusade; yet, undeniably, it is a War of the Cross. It is not a war set afoot to get possession of the Lord's grave from men who never loved Him; but a war to release God from the cross on which barbarians have nailed Him, with the nails of pride, and lust, and cruelty. Shall God hang there for ever; or will all those who are not barbarians, make a way to get near the Cross, and take God down? Many of those who are not barbarians, say; "But we are men of peace, we may not fight" (not realizing that the peace of duty is deeper than the peace of circumstance). And, all the while, God is crying: "My son, My son, man, why hast thou forsaken Me?"

AS Thou hast suffered for our spiritual redemption, so may we be courageous enough, and willing enough to suffer for Thine Eternal Righteousness' sake. Amen.

LOVING GOD.

No man truly loves God, unless he is whole-heartedly spreading salvation; for love is not passive, but active; and every true lover reveals God, unconsciously, in his speech and actions. Life enlives a man with visible beauty and grace, in proportion to his inner loveliness. We have not really received the Revelation of God, unless the whole world has become transformed for us, through our making all our wishes selfless and all our actions loving. Loving God gives us the capacity of expansiveness towards man; and it can give us as many hands of succour as there are necessitous lives within our reach; it can even help us to help those, who resent help, and to cure those, who do not know what they are sick.

HELP us, O Father, to love Thee in deed and in truth, for Thy Truest Lover's sake. Amen.

A MARRIAGE CEREMONY.

The grandest ceremony, to which mankind can be invited, is the Marriage of Religion and Art. He, Who has been to that festival (and most men have an opportunity of accepting the common invitation to it), may live for ever after with the children of that marriage -- the creations of the masters and their brides. And blessed is he, who can bring a gift to the wedding.

HELP us, O our Maker, that all our works may proclaim Thy Beauty and Righteousness; for the Counsellor's sake. Amen.

THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS.

Sometimes, when we arise from Intercession, or from communing with the Highest, in a holy solitude, we find that one, or another (here, or departed), whom we love, has been praying by our side. And when we

give thanks for the overflowing mercies of our lives, in the Company of the Faithful, in the House of God, we may see the praises of true hearts, here, arising, as many-coloured flowers, or as blue incense, to the Eternal Throne; and we may hear, blent with man's worship, the enraptured singing of the Saints.

O THOU, in the aspiration towards Whom, we meet our beloved, bring more and more souls into the bound of Divine Fellowship, for the sake of the Friend of Friends, our Blessed Lord. Amen.

THE OATH.

"The Lord swear, and will not repent; thou art a priest forever." We are priests unto God, ministers unto humanity; for Blessed Jesus never says to any of us: "Follow Me!" without also adding: "And I will make you fishers of men." The first step of the fisher of men must be to get rid of self, by passing through the valley of humiliation, which is not a place of dreariness only; for there are gracious and beautiful flowers there, that have sprung where our dear Lord left His footprints. The fisher must avoid all praise and thanks: for he is only doing his plain duty, and joyful service; and he must draw no man after himself, but point all men to their merciful and adorable Lord. There cannot be too many priests, nor can any two priests hope to be alike. When the Lord says: "Follow Me!" He tells the soul whether it is to be a doctor, a nurse, or a scavenger; a ruler, a statesman, or a gossamer. Sometimes He has need of a flaming prophet, to cry "Woe, woe!" and sometimes of a kind shepherd to lead souls into quiet pastures; and often He deposes penitents to serve Him as courageous and intrepid firemen. Let every man seek to fulfil his measure of the grace of his sacred calling.

HELP us, O our Great Appointer, to serve Thee in Thy universal temple of the world, as Thou wilt teach us how; for the sake of Him, Who has called us. Amen.

PAIN.

Pain is man's ardent, though stern lover—the comforter of his brief days and the monitor of his long nights. But for that loving, man were proud, and passionate for sense, not soul. Through his own pain, man learns to share the whole world's care, and to feel the weight of the universal woe. Pain is the Rose of Life—the red blossom laid upon the whiteness of man's flesh, and the kind thorn that protects him from the ravager—self. Let no man, in the throes of pain, mis-call and abuse it; for pain has ever been the close joy of all the flame-engirt, and the high bliss of all the crucified.

OUR Loving Parent, may we not rebel against Thy kind discipline; for His sake, Who came to dignify suffering and to teach us the mystery of pain. Amen.

APPROACH TO CHRIST.

Many, who would on reflection, have become Christ's followers, hold themselves aloof from Him, through their peevish criticism of His disciples' mistakes. If they would avoid the inevitable blunders of Christianity, and would pray for faith to enable them to realize the life of Christ, they would find a Leader, Whom they could joyfully follow. No man can avoid his share of the world's debt of honour to the Heart of Christ, which has enlarged the sphere of Humanity.

O THOU, Who art the Just One, the Image of God, help us to learn from Thee, Who ever livest and movest in Heaven and on earth. Amen.

THE WATER-CARRIER.

The man was a water-carrier for the village where he was born. He loved the village; and had never wandered from it and its customs, though travellers had told him tales of a brilliant world, and had shown

him various fashions of attire, and tricks of manner and speech. His pitchers and he belonged to the village as surely as did the never-failing stream, which flowed in its neighbourhood. He did not know who his father and mother were ; for no one had ever seemed to own him ; and he did not resemble the folk around him. And because he was lonely, from his childhood, he made friends with the Great Spirit, Who had appointed the man to be a water-carrier, not only for the folk of the village, and for the wilderness, but for Himself and for His garden. The man kept the water-pots clean, and mended them, when they were broken, either through his own carelessness, or through stones having been thrown at them by the wanton ; and, if they could not be mended, he made new ones. So he was never idle from morning till night ; and often he worked all night long, at making, and mending, and cleansing the water-pots. He always tried to make the waterpots beautiful, and to vary them in shape ; because the Great Spirit is beautiful, and His works are varied in design. The water-pots were heavy ; and sometimes the man thought he could carry them no longer. But, after having slept well, he always awakened, at the call of the musical waters, and was able to rise again and seek the stream, and fill and carry his water-pots. And he knew that, when he was gone, another water-carrier would come, and carry his pots to and fro ; because, some of the villagers, being blinded by tears, or lamed, through misfortune, or being too lazy, or too indifferent to come and get the water, were never left by the Great Spirit without a water-carrier. For the Great Spirit is responsible for the health and the cleanness of the folk of the villages, which He has set on the mountains, and in the valleys ; and He cannot have it laid to His charge that any man can neither drink of nor bathe in the Living Water.

ENDUE, O Great Spirit, all Thy Ministers with unfailing faithfulness, for our High Priest's sake. Amen.

UGLINESS.

All ugliness is an offence, attributable to some human being. He, who makes unbeautiful things curses himself and his fellow-men, by precluding, or maiming, or obliterating his own, and other men's developed, or latent, sense of beauty. Ugliness should be made as criminal as indecency. All apostles of beauty spend their lives in passionately challenging every ugliness; and many of them succeed in vanquishing it, and establishing beauty in its place.

O THOU, Who art all Truth and all Beauty, help man to see as Thou seest, and to create and fashion according to Thy inspiration. Amen.

LIVING WITNESSES.

In the everlasting Drama of God in man, let us try to reveal our Maker as fully as possible to our fellow-men. By being true, we can let the light of God shine through us; and we must never be afraid, either by seasonable speech, or by the dignity of silence, to evidence the sweet consciousness of God that grows from a habit of close communion with Him and with the Saints; nor to exhibit the strength that is stored courage. To the questions of the curious, we can solemnly lift a silent hand, to point to the Crucified; or we can turn with a quiet finger the pages of the Book of Books; for it is only the unwise who try to reduce a holy mystery to a mathematical proposition, and to draw the veil of sacred dignity, that is the Lord's covering of His Divine Personality. It is not by coining holy things into imperfect language, that we can help others; but by living the Life of Christ unfalteringly in all circumstances and under all conditions.

MAKE us fearless witnesses for Thee, Dear Lord Jesus, Faithful Witness of the Father. Amen.

THE SABBATH.

Many talk about the observance of the Lord's Day, as though every day were not the Lord's Day. They make the Sabbath dull and gloomy, in accordance with the time-worn suggestions of an ancient body of law-givers; and they fiercely resent anyone's making it a day of freedom, of interest, or of delight. They ignore Christ's saying, that the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.

HELP us evermore, O our Living God, to obey Thy progressive Word, and to enjoy with reverential gratitude all our privileges. Amen.

COMMUNION.

In every darkness and loneliness of life, we can seek to live in the light, which shines, unsetting, from the crowns of the glorified in Paradise, instead of in the flickering rays of the world's approval; and we can lift up our perplexed minds to the serene and wide intelligence of the souls who are living in the Uncreated Light; then their calm will be granted to us. With every new burden of sorrow, a new power is given; for pain quickens the desire of apprehension and the ability of comprehension. It is impossible that they, who love truly, should not go through the twilight of the passing of their beloved, and descend into the darkness of the grave with them; but all, who are capable of making that dolorous journey, are also capable of emerging gradually into the ecstatic light of Paradise. It is through earnest prayer that God allows a soul to find its loved ones on the other side. At first the soul sees them, as they were, here, in their pains and difficulties; but, by and by, it sees them, as they now are, shining, and breathing joyous encouragement. For the way to the supernatural lies through the natural; and we climb from the one to the other.

O THOU God of Saints, unto Whom all live, let us be worthy of walking with Thy saints on the white-starred grass of Paradise; let us gaze, with them, on its bright and musical waters, and talk with them of the things concerning our learning on earth, and our perfecting in Heaven, for His sake, through Whom we meet Thee and our glorified beloved. Amen.

THE TORCH.

There is only one kind of torch that can lighten every darkness; and it is inextinguishable, and will burn for ever. There are not many of these torches, as they are not easy to obtain; for they are made of the Wood of the Cross, on which their bearer has been crucified at some point of his eternal existence.

USE, Dear Lord, the wood of our crosses to lighten the dark world; for Eternal Light's sake. Amen.

EASTER.

APERIATUR TERRA, ET GERMINET SALVATOREM.

Let us lift up our hearts, in the Resurrection joy of the springtime; for the Lord cometh; He cometh in gladness walking among the lilies, by the empty sepulchre—the lilies of our faith, and the grave of our transfigured sorrow. Hail, Happy Easter, evermore the signal of man's rising joyous and regenerate from his sins; and of his awakening in Paradise, after the death of his mortality; Ave, Ave, Hail! Who is this, that cometh forth, clad with the bright morning, casting aside the dark apparel of the night! O, our souls, is it not He, the Discomfiter of fear, the Vindicator of pain, the Vanquisher of sorrow, the Overcomer of Death? Verily it is He, Whom Cirrus, attending, overwings with legions and legions of white angels, in the

everlasting blue ; and for Whom Adonis unrolls the tender sward of living emerald, starred with innumerable and joy-coloured flowers ; and for Whom the world-wind gathers the stars into one triumphant and choiring galaxy. He, Who was our Man of Sorrows, is our King of glory : Ave, Ave, Hail ! . . . He has come ; the Gates have lifted up their heads ; the King of Glory has come in. Let us come forth, in the garments of gladness upon His Way. O sons and daughters of the Almighty God, O brothers and sisters of the Living Love, let us accept Him with the receiving heart, Who is offering us not only all heaven and all earth, but HIMSELF ; and let us give ourselves lovingly and loyally to Him, Who is the royal-hearted King of all Kings for evermore. Let us cease from the adoration of man, and lose ourselves in the adoration of God ; let us cease from worshipping idols, and worship the Lord of Infinite reality. Ave, Ave, Hail !

OFFERING-PRAYER.

O our newly-risen and everlasting Saviour, we cease to lift, in mournful patience, trembling hands of fearful supplication ; and we stand up and bless Thee, with steadfast belief and illimitable expectation ; for we know that Thou wilt more than crown our uttermost desire for rejoicing holiness. May we prove our ardent devotion, by offering ourselves, and all we have, to Thee in Thy Holy House, and to the poor and the afflicted in the ways of the world. We love Thee, for that Death being dead and gone, man need no more make moaning ; we love Thee, indeed in choral joy and clamant praise. As the world waves its green banners of hope, so we wave our white banners of Resurrection.

Amen, Amen, and Alleluia !

CONSOLATION.

As man perceives the stars, when day darkens ; so he receives unforeseen consolations, when life darkens ;

for he finds that holy visions were awaiting his seeing of them. When the lights of visible and audible companionship die out, he is permitted to enter the light and joy of the Communion of Saints, and to walk in the rays of the Sun of Righteousness, as never before. He enters into an undreamed of nearness to Christ; for it is the wounded lamb that the Shepherd carries in His bosom. He grows more and more into a spiritual affinity with the Invisible; and the Real becomes more and more accessible to him. His life is lived in joy; he moves, heart-beat by heart-beat, in God's love. His prayer, in ascending, becomes a Song of Praise, at one with the Song of All-Creation. And, in the end, he learns the meaning of Faith.

O THOU, Who hast ordained sorrow to be the touchstone of the soul, as Thou hast ordained love to be the touchstone of the heart, receive our sincere and humble adoration of the Cross; to which keep us faithful, for His sake, Who died upon it, for the consecration of sorrow. Amen.

QUALITY-COLOURS.

To the seer, every quality of rightness has its attendant vision, varying with the expression of the seer's character; but unvarying as to the colour of the quality. So the seer sees the glories of spirit-colour enrobing, and flowing from the possessors of particular qualities. The gracious show rose-colour; the tender and the pitiful, faint blue and pale rose; the sincere, blue and green; the chaste, blue and white; the simple, green and white; the royal-hearted, ivory and gold; the peaceful, purple; the passionately-merciful, crimson; the generous, green and gold; and the faithful, purple and green. The seer's world glows with colour; and all his streets are flower-gardens.

LET us, dear Lord, glow with the rejoicing colour of whatsoever heavenly quality Thou wilt help us to attain to. Amen.

JUDGE NOT.

Not to judge others is one of the most difficult things for a man to learn, and he hardly learns it before the day of his death. He thinks that every man, who has not always acted up to his principles, is a hypocrite; forgetting, for the time being, his own lapses and aberrations. Let him hesitate to judge his fellow-beings, by realizing that there is a spark of divinity in them, as in himself. He will be ashamed and sorry, when he finds that he judges other men from the pinnacle of his own highest achievement, instead of from the lowest pit of his degradations; and he will gradually learn to mortify his selfish judgement by ceasing to judge. It is well to practice self-depreciation and appreciation of others; and to believe that others' invisible life, which he sees so imperfectly, may be more beautiful than their visible life.

O EMMANUEL, dwell Thou so fully in us, that we may be enabled to commend to Thee, and to Thy Everlasting Mercy, both our own failings, and those of all with whom we have to do; for Thine own sake, Whose only comment on a mortal sin was: "Go; and sin no more." Amen.

COURAGE.

It requires courage for men to remain true to the Revelations of God to them, in the face of their friends, and of their enemies; for their friends will reprove them in love; and their enemies will deride them in scorn—neither friends nor enemies believing in a Revelation, which they themselves have not yet experienced. But let the illuminated rest in the Lord; remembering that boldness suffers defeat, but that confidence in God effects the impossible; and that not many words are needed to spread the Revelation.

HELP us, O Thou, Whom we know and love, ever to confess Thee before all with whom we have to do; as Thou hast confessed us before the Blessed Company of true believers; for our Saviour's sake. Amen.

THE TREE OF LIFE.

Mankind is the leaves, the efflorescence and the fruit of the Tree of Life. And, though mankind must droop and die, for a season he has made the Tree beautiful, and has given delight and sustenance to God. And whatever falls from the Tree, and mingles with the earth, helps the Tree to renew itself, in its eternal succession of Springtimes.

LEAD us through life and lives, in Thine eternal use, O Thou Source of all Life. Amen.

RESTORATION.

The restoration of the soul is frequently accomplished through the medium of physical pain; for the purpose of pain is remedial, all suffering causing detachment from the temporal, and a ready turning to the spiritual. In ease, we breathe the atmosphere of selfishness, ignorance hangs over us like a thick cloud; and we are stifled by swathings of indifference, and armoured with callousness. Pain is the sword of the Spirit that pierces our outer being, and sets the soul free to breathe and expand. Pain comes in glory to the soul, in its full salvation, from either sin or sorrow, as joyously as a sudden sight of the sea might come to a born-blind man, or as the hearing of some stupendous oratorio, to a born-deaf man; and the soul's thankfulness is correspondingly wide and intense.

WASH away self from us, O Lord, in the deep waters of affliction. Amen.

BY THE PRAYER OF FAITH.

We strive, and strive to be good, from failure to failure, forgetting that the only triumphant method is through the medium of the practice of prayer, which alone can help us to live up to our aspirations, continually. Only the prayer of Faith avails, Faith being the heavenly heritage that we can all have, for the claiming. Faith enables us to fulfil the divine purpose of our lives; it casts out all doubt, by reminding us of God's life-long mercies—deliverances, consolations, and restorations; and so we come into a habitual state of earnest thankfulness, that finds expression in endless giving. To put our whole trust in God is the divine secret of Holy accomplishment; and to act with every stirring of divine grace is the one way of sweet satisfaction. At first, the working of grace is painful; but, when the heart is truly regenerate, the movements of grace are the very joy of its existence.

SAVE us, O Lord, continually, through the constant habit of prayer for Thy loving grace; for Jesus' sake. Amen.

LIGHTS.

Folk may see to work, in Life's darknesses, by the light of faces that shine with eager and passionate affection; for the Lovers of Humanity cannot hide their light, or withhold it from anyone within its radius; and the more impersonal the love is, the wider the radius becomes.

LET us kneel, O Eternal Love, and give thanks, whenever we come within the radius of love's light, for the Light of Light's sake. Amen.

EVIL.

Many are deterred from belief in God by the fact of the existence of evil ; and others believe in God only by denying its existence. But the fact of the existence of evil does not preclude belief in God ; for all goodness implies recognised, or unrecognised belief in God ; and goodness is only maintained by conflict with evil, contact with evil being the supreme test of virtue. The easier a man's goodness, the less its value, from the point of view of strength to himself and help to others. Overcoming is man's chief crown ; and the highest honour that life could offer to the King of Glory was the crown of thorns. We should not rail at the existence of evil, were we duly thankful for the Coming of the Son of God, Who came to be the Vindicator of suffering, and the Destroyer of the power of evil.

ENLIGHTEN the darkness of our minds, O Triumphant Redeemer, that we may see in all strife and withstanding the potentiality of our triumphing also. Amen.

SOUL-LOVE.

There is no greater happiness than the joyous passion of soul-love ; therefore we should pray God daily that our lives may be quick with self-giving—the only means of divine or human redemption. Self-giving is the sweet secret of the God-given vitality, which, alone, arouses the lethargic to receive the holy dower of grace. Let us pray to find our Way of the Cross (if we have not already trodden it) ; for it is impossible to be alive to Christ, until we have died to the world. When we are once fully alive to Christ, our previous existence sinks into oblivion, as Reality gets firmer and firmer hold of us, and as each moment becomes instinct with prayer. The true lover of souls goes manfully forward on the universal way, with brave countenance alight with love, his presence bringing the vital currents of

Reality to all, whom he meets. Our true birthright of Reality is tested by our contact with the world; for, until the world ceases to sway us, we are not really free; and until we can be heedless of scorn and reviling, we are not true sharers of the dolours of Christ.

USE us, O Light of Light, to irradiate other souls by the shining of Thy love through us, evermore. Amen.

AT THE END.

At the end of a journey, when a man finds his home and life in some congenial house of labour, companionship, or Art, he forgets the infinite woes and pains of his journey thither—the long nights, when he was lost, and only found his way, through great tribulation; the cold, and hunger, and nakedness, that he has suffered, in depriving himself to pay the tolls of the road—in the attainment of the starry joys and the illimitable compensations of the Goal of his pilgrimage.

O THOU, Who art the Amen to all Thine agelong promises, shine upon us in the hour of the death of our mortality, and lead us lovingly into Thy Endless Light. Amen.

THE ORDER.

There are many Orders of Jesus in the world; but His own Order is the Order of the Loving Heart, whose Rule is the Will of God. And to His own Order all the other Orders eventually converge. The Orders of the Clean Mind, the Open Countenance, the Willing Feet, the Helping Hand, the Gracious Voice, and the Winning Tongue, are all fitting Orders, where souls may find grace, and learn sweetness; before entering upon the stern discipline and high dignity of the Rule of Rules.

HELP us, O Thou Great Ordainer, to love the discipline, that brings us into conformity with Him, Who endured the scourge, the crown of thorns, the nails and the spear; for His sufferings' sake. Amen.

FORGIVENESS.

It is impossible for us to forgive a fellow-being until we are able to put ourselves in his place, and to live, in imagination, his life. This attitude of loving imagination to those, who injure, or annoy us, can only be attained through the cultivation of universal sympathy; but, when once attained, it keeps resentment out of our hearts, leaving room for sweet charity, and the possibility of continual peace of mind. Passive forgiveness, only, can never bring us the calm dignity of Him, Who said: "Do good to ~~them~~ that hate you;" but active forgiveness may bring our lives into conformity with the grace of Jesus.

DEAR Lord, help us, ever, to be able to repeat truly the words "as we forgive them" in Thine eternal Prayer. Amen.

SOWING.

Every harvest is a surprise to the sower; for no sower is wholly conscious of all that he sows, nor of the extent of his field; every man sowing both intentionally and unintentionally. Many folk are willing to sow seeds, but few are careful to sow them in suitable ground; we should sow the seed of truth in the fields of untruthfulness; the seed of love, in the land of hatred; the seed of joy, in the house of sorrow; the seed of mercy in the heart of the pitiless; the seed of holy poverty, in the room of luxury; the seed of chastity, in the breast of self-indulgence.

O THOU Giver of good seed, bless our sowing of it with the sun and rain and wind of Thy free grace. Amen.

ACCESS.

It is through belief in, and love of The Holy Name that we have the simplest access to God. Some have found that the repeating of the name, by day, and by night, throughout weeks, or months, or years, brings them eventually into the stupendous joy of access to the transcendence of the Divine Majesty. Those, who have known the accessibility of Divine Grace through our Blessed Lord, progress from passion to purity; from unrest to peace; from self to divine unselfness. And they find the Father, more and more in the Way of our Lord—the Way of their souls in the Story of His Dutiful Soul, and in the Power of His Resurrection-Life. If they look to the end of the Way, the beginning of it will be sanctified, through whatever grievous dolours they may have to pass.

O THOU, through Whom we draw nigh to the Father, bring us lovingly and willingly into the bound of Thy holy desiring, Who art evermore our Brother, and our Friend, our Vindicator, and our Advocate. Amen.

GROWTH.

There is no growth without throe; and we can only grow into Truth through the steady development of Grace. Spiritual events, that seem to come so suddenly, like the blossom in Springtime, are the result of a long winter of tribulation; and the crown of glory is but the burgeoning of the crown of thorns. We grow in the Love of God, as Jesus grew from human childhood to Divine Manhood; and the more we grow, the higher we shift our ideal; so that nothing abides in one stay; but everywhere there is continuous advance in holiness. The little seed of our love for God breaks into the blossom of light and glory here and develops into the rejoicing fruit of Paradise hereafter.

O THOU, from Whom we come, and to Whom we return, further our heavenly growth; and may we never retard Thy holy work in us by our selfishness; for the Holy Child's sake, Who grew into Thy Divineness. Amen.

REGARDING SIN.

Let us despise no one, living in whatever sin; for every way of life is a way to God. Others' sins are no worse than ours are, apparent differences in sin being only the difference in kinds of temptation, and not the difference in degree of virtue. Those, who have the august aim of Overcoming, in the strength of God, never trample on unaroused souls, but stoop down, and awaken them, and lift them up, and set them upon their feet, imparting to them, meanwhile, the passion for the reclamation of souls, as an expression of true repentance and real thankfulness.

O THOU, Who wert all lowly, and art now reigning, Whom all life may touch, at some point of existence and experience, awaken us all to the consciousness of Thee. Amen.

THE TREE.

The cross is the Tree of Life in every man's garden, and on it the mystic fruits of sainthood grow—those fruits, that are the sustenance of mankind, and that most men receive unthinkingly, and without gratitude, as a matter of course. The Tree will only bear fruit, if it is reverently and carefully tended; and there is a woeful number of trees, that bear no fruit. The women, who tend their trees, are clad in the simple and lowly grace of Mary; and the men, who tend their trees, are habited in the calm and joyous dignity of Jesus. When the fulness of time is come, every man is crucified upon his tree—those, who have not tended the tree, unwillingly; and those, who have cherished the tree,

with no reluctance. The reverent and the loving bless their crucifixion, as being the high recompense for their labour of love and privilege; and they look joyfully forward to their resurrection and ascension; for they know that the partakers of Jesus' sorrows are also the partakers of Our Lord's glory.

KEEP us, Dear Lord Jesus, ever abiding in the continuous happiness of the holy and inexplicable mystery and blessedness of the cross. Amen.

TALK.

Talk is the mill of the frivolous, into which everything is thrown. Nothing is too strange, too holy, or too personal, to be ground by these industrious millers. When the grist for the mill is their own experience, or their false ideas of other folks' experience, it is ground into vapid bread for themselves, and becomes the only food, which they can digest. They are always hungry; and they go hither and thither, seeking gossip to grind into news. It is the noise of this grinding that mars the music of the spheres.

O THOU, Who art the Living and Eternal Word, help us to be still and silent, and to know that Thou art God. Amen.

THE DIVINE DRAMA.

As man's spirit ascends from plane to plane of living, it meets not only with dear spirits, who are experiencing the like consciousness of God, but it draws upwards other spirits from lower planes; for there is no finality in life; and Our Blessed Lord's continuous Ascension is eternally drawing the race higher and higher in the sphere of being. His constant dying and resurrection are evermore making men capable of ascending; for the Life of Jesus is a never-ending Drama of God-in-man; and every man born has to take his part in the sacred representation of Divinity in humanity.

BRING us, O Loving Jesus, through the precious mysteries of soul-birth, soul-agony, and soul-resurrection, to the triumph of soul-ascension. Amen.

UNEDUCATED.

They who most need education, despise it most; and they do not realize that it could lead them away from their wearisome selves, their uncongenial companions, and their unlovely labours, into sublime places of joy, in the unseen world of wonder; and that it could make their life a miracle of visible loveliness, and cause their mind to expand till it could embrace the universe.

MAY we, O Universal Giver, neglect none of Thine inestimably precious opportunities. Amen.

OFFERINGS.

Every hour is a bright jewel, that we may offer to God; the day is ours, and the night also is ours, that we may sanctify both to His holy service. If our time of rest is the praying, that is a looking toward the sacred horizons of life, where man fully and freely meets his Maker, life becomes one gradual transformation, the Light of God falling upon and illuminating every offering. Each day, in passing, can, through its endless opportunities, dower us with the royal virtues of humility and gentleness, that open for us treasure-houses of wonder and vision, whose glories we may try to impart to imperceptive souls. When the habit of supplication grows into a constant consciousness of God, we give all our moments happily to Him; and this free joyfulness of close communion can be imparted to receptive hearts, and thus help them to make their offerings of goodwill.

MAY we offer all we have, and all we are to Thee, in thankful adoration, O our Loving God. Amen.

IN TEMPTATION.

Whenever we are tempted to sin, let us, at the same moment, remember that God loves us, more than even our dearest friends love us; and that, as we hate to grieve or displease those, whom we love, so much the more should we avoid displeasing our dear God. And let us remember that He made us, and knows everything about us; that He allows temptation; and that the eternal fluctuating of our lives between peace and warfare, labour and rest, joy and sorrow, is of His ordaining. And let us never forget that our Blessed Lord still lives, and is personally helping us, ever and ever; not only by His recorded sayings of the past, but by the intense reality of His present, living, hourly teaching. Those, who say: "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" never fail of an answer; and those, who act according to His answer, have the assurance of joy.

O GOD of Pity, forgive our aberrations, and convince us that they occurred through our not loving Thee enough; and may the realization of Thy love for us, and of ours for Thee, save us whenever we are assailed; for Jesus' sake. Amen.

IDEAS.

Ideas are travelling waves on the stationary lake of the mind, which break upon the shore of everlasting wonder. The lake that is not whipped into life-giving waves, by the freshening winds of the spirit, becomes a stagnant pool of death and of all uncleanness.

SEND us Thy inspirations, morning by morning, O God, for ever and ever. Amen.

FINDING GOD.

Most of us want to realize God, in this life, that we may not go to Him ungratefully and empty-handed, in the next life. One of the commonest stumbling-blocks,

in the way of our receiving God, is our blind pride; for, in our ignorance we do not want to be taught how to open our hearts to Him, thinking that we know already. But the measure of humility is the measure of knowledge; and the measure of lowliness, the measure of grace. Many think that they want to know how to receive God; yet they are not willing to go where, alone, they may learn the true way, or to give up what it is necessary for them to forsake, in order to be able to make room for God in their lives. All resistance of the Spirit lengthens our probation, and beclouds our intellect. But when we realize that we can turn to God at any moment, as He is never absent from our heart, our lives break forth into the exultant *Laus Deo*, that accompanies all our actions, both in this life and beyond the grave.

TEACH us, Dear Lord, that whoever sets out on the path to Thee, in true humility, has already begun to find Thee; and, that we may not fail to find Thee, let us not fail to do what is pleasing unto Thee, and accordant to Thy Righteousness. Amen.

FRIENDLINESS.

To his friends, and to all, who cross his path of life, a man should seek to stand for courage, faith, and the strong mercy of curative help. It is for those, who have been our saviours, that we have a steady and profound regard; and not for those, who are only eager to share our pleasures, and who pander to our conceit by conscious, or unconscious flattery. Better the rebuke of the righteous, than the approval of the easy-going. Those, who live in the atmosphere of weak sentimentality, have never even crossed the threshold of friendship; and no man has learned the meaning of friendliness, until he has been a friend of the friendless, a countenancer of the outcast, and a comforter of the sorrow-stricken.

EVERMORE be our Friend of Friends, Dear Lord Jesus, that we may learn from Thee how best to be a friend to our fellow-beings.

FOOTFALLS.

Every footfall is a prayer ; for, with every step he takes, a man is either drawing nearer God, or wandering further away from Him; and both of these attitudes are passionate pleadings and utterances for the need of the Divine Presence.

DRAW all men to Thyself, Dear God, through the ever-varying mystery of Thy mercifulness; for His sake, Who came to help us to find Thee. Amen.

GOODBYE.

“Goodbye, my father ;” says the leaf to the tree ; “You sent me forth into the light and air ; and I have been happy ; and, in gratitude, I helped you, though so little, to breathe and to grow. Now, in dying, I give back to you what I took from you. Goodbye, my father: I do not feel that I am lost : I am only taking a lowlier place; for I fall at your roots, and make fresh mould to nourish them.”

“Goodbye, my Mother ;” says man to Life ; “you sent me forth into the world of wonder and beauty; and I have known happiness ; and have tried to repay you by offering you homage, by sacrificing to you, and by preserving and advancing your sway. Now, that I am dying, I give back to you what I have learned of you, that it may be a help to humanity.”

O UNIVERSAL Creator and Renewer of all life, we bless Thee for our opportunity of joyous living. Amen.

THE CHRIST.

Jesus came to earth as a specialised human being—the unique Manifestation in Time of the Absolute—Jesus, the Christ of God. But, now that Jesus has gone from us, through the veil of death, Christ is a part of every man, through the energies of Divine Love: Jesus, the Saviour of our humanity; Christ, the earnest of our divinity; Jesus, our Friend and Brother, Christ, Emmanuel, God with us, and in us. Jesus had to leave us, that Christ might abide with us for ever.

LIFT for us, more and more, dear Lord, the veil of the mystery of Thy divine and human nature, that we may the more dwell in Thee, and Thou, in us. Amen.

THE RESTING-PLACE.

Every man can make his life a resting-place upon the common road—the common road that is the Way of God. He can protect the resting-place with the ever-green of sincerity, and surround it with the blue flowers of simple-heartedness, and the white flowers of single-mindedness, with the rose-red flowers of passionate pity, and the pale-hued flowers of tenderness. He can keep his house bare and roomy, by getting rid of the various accumulations of selfness—importance, aggrandisement, pride and ostentation; and he can furnish it with the consecrated dignities of lowliness, gentleness, self-effacement, and plainness of speech and dealing. He can restore the wayfarer in a bed of peace; and light for him the golden flame of adoration. He can warm him at the fire of sweet mercy, and feed him with the bread of blessed charity; and, if he pours for the wayfarer the wine of the spirit, his eyes may be opened to see, sitting at his board, the Son of Man. For the Son of Man still walks the world, homeless, and hungry, and without where to lay His head.

ENTER the door of each man's life, in wayfaring guise, O Jesus, and there take Thy rest. Amen.

ONE WAY OF JOY.

The soul is cramped by meanness, until its habitual generosity is a suffering one, and until it is refined from the dross of self-aggrandisement. No giving is worthy, unless it implies the utter breaking up of self, and involves continuous and stern sacrifice. It is the sacramental element in giving that is its intense and secret joy. Accumulations of externalities are adoration of self; but dispensings and willing deprivations are proofs of the universality of love. No one can really love God, who is not continually giving—to his earthly cost and his heavenly blessedness; and any man may well ask himself what his religion costs him, and how far he is paying his debts to mankind, by sacrifices to life. It is an ignoble thing for a man to be overtaken by death, before he has begun to divest himself of money and goods, and before he has handed on, to those, who are capable of receiving them, the sweet secrets of divineness, which God has vouchsafed to him. Instead of marvelling at the sanctity of the saints, let us try to take their first step to sainthood—the glad irrevocable step of renunciation. When we once begin to live out the method of a suffering generosity, we find it to be the most joyous and life-bringing of experiences. All loving gifts are the keys of the golden gates of Paradise, as secret and happy givers well know.

TEACH us, dear Lord Jesus, Who gavest Thy life-blood for our salvation, to love the sweet joys of continuous giving. Amen.

THE SEVEN LAMPS.

In the Chapel of the Devout there are seven lamps burning: the Lamp of our Lord, in the centre; and the lamps of pity, mercy, and love, on one side of it; and the lamps of hope, faith, and experience on the other side. Only the oil of devotion will burn in these lamps—the devotion to God that is the succouring of humanity.

LORD, give us the grace of whole-hearted devotion to the service of the Light of the World. Amen.

HAVINGS.

A man possesses every city, that he has seen, and every land wherein he has sojourned. His is all Beauty that he has looked on—of fountain, of river, of sea; of plain, of hill, of mountain; of star, of moon, of sun; of the momentarily changing faces of heaven and of earth; of the face, and form of man, woman, and child; and of all miraculous Art. His life is fed by every sign of affection, by every token of love; and it is cleansed by every wave of sorrow, every rainfall of affliction. There sleep, or wake in him all sacred sounds of music, that he has ever heard; and every Maker, who has ever lived has left him an immortal inheritance. Every song, that a man sings, should be out of gratitude for these havings; and all his actions should be spiritual generousities.

GIVE us, O Bountiful Giver, the eternal gratitude of continual self-sacrifice; for His sake, Who gave His life and death for mankind. Amen.

LIVING WITH JESUS.

The darker a man's circumstances are, the more need there is for the Light of Light to shine upon his life; therefore let him open his heart's doors and windows, and make all his dealings plain and sincere, thus losing no beam of the Everlasting Sun of Righteousness, nor missing the free winds of the Eternal Spirit. The continual simplification of life is its chief salvation from obscurity and perplexity: possessions are burdens; and debts are accumulations of despair. If a man lives habitually in Light and Air, he will not only be content with the bread of sincerity, and the wine of simplicity, but he will care little for other food (And why should man desire other sustenance than that, which God requires?) This life of holy health induces quiet sleep in the Arms

of the Everlasting; so that, whether a man wakes again on earth, or into the strange surprise of the Great Beyond, he is safe in the security of the Blessed Life, which he shares, here, or there, with Dear Jesus, Who was simple, and sincere, and earnest, in His earth-life. If we can, now and here, be of the Fellowship of our Loving Comrade, we shall also be (Glory to His Name!) the sharers in His sublime and transcending joy, in the life-to-come.

MAY we all, whatever be our hindrances and drawbacks, come into the blessedness of the Everlasting Life of our Dear Lord. Amen.

LIFE AND ART.

In the marriage of Life and Art, neither party can act suitably without the other. If they are divorced, or when they attempt to act separately, Life is inert, and Art becomes meaningless and void. But, when they act together, in holy love, the glory of the universe may be manifested.

LET us, O Most Holy Creator, ever work according to the fullest Revelation of Thee, which we are capable of receiving. Amen.

WITHDRAWAL.

Lack of meditation makes us precipitate in action, and irregular in growth. Only the quiet heart and the still life can hear the whispers of the Holy Spirit. Loneliness is our sweet secret with Jesus; and pain is His enormous kindness of graving the crucifix on our hearts. The exquisiteness of suffering, our dear Lord's chief love for us, is always followed by revelation; and every rung on the ladder of tribulation is a step into the supernatural. The imparting of the stupendous mystery of sorrow is our Dear Lover's annunciation of His love towards us—the amazing love, that cares enough for

our perfection, to train us, by loss and pain, by thwarting and distress, in order that we may learn the utmost meanings of His mercy. The rare visits of Peace to us will be lengthened into habitual abiding in Peace, if we will only attune our hearts to her sweet and quiet rhythms of life. Withdrawal, deliberate or enforced, can alone intensify our prevision of the spiritual, and make our gaze on the blessed Future, keen and all-absorbing and saving.

○ THOU, Who withdrewest to the wilderness, teach us, through our withdrawals, Thy Way of Life. Amen.

THE GLASS CASE.

Few of the aristocratic, and of the rich, have the spirit to break, and escape from the glass case in which they were placed at birth; so they remain cut off from reality with regard to poverty, love, marriage, class, race, and religion. Some of them do not even know that they are in a glass case; and many of those, who know that they are there, prefer to stay there; for they consider it a place of elegance, and that it protects them from the world's dust and the earth's mishandling. Some of them, who would like to escape, are afraid of being cut by the glass; and others are afraid of the disorder consequent on a breakage. A few succeed in getting out of the glass case; and no one, who has come out of it, ever returns to it.

○ THOU, Who art the Deliverer of all men, set us free from our prisons. Amen.

REPENTANCE.

It would be easy for men to forsake their sins, and to avoid their temptations, did they realise that they were sharing the Passion of the Great Lover of Souls. Remorse is not repentance; neither is a petulant

attempted avoidance of the consequences of sin, repentance. True repentance is sorrow for sin, coupled with an entire forsaking of it; and it is always followed by the Divine Mercy of Forgiveness, the satisfaction of expiation, and the ecstasy of renewal. The penitent best enjoys the penance of saving other souls from like case to his own; so his deepest sorrow becomes his highest joy. True repentance is only sustained through the deepening passion and widening power of prayer; and a man's constancy must be the earnest to the world of the reality of his religion. A contrite heart can become a habitual attitude by means of the contemplation of our Dear Lord hanging on the mishandled tree, and by dwelling on the mystical universal cross of mankind—the cross that is the tree by which we climb to heaven. So the penitent grows into the sweet composure of the sanctified.

BLOT out the remembrance of the sins that we have utterly forsaken, lest they arise and trouble us; and save us from ourselves, dear Lord; and may we humbly return to Thee after every aberration, for His sake, Who can teach us to suffer and be strong. Amen.

THE STREAM.

The soul is a stream, wherein man's life is reflected; it came from the secret source of God, and, after vivifying man, it returns to the unfathomable ocean of God, bearing to Him the sum of man's experience, for the furthering of His inconceivable labours of everlasting re-creation.

O THOU, Who art the Ocean, to which the stream of mankind's life flows, may we ever bring to Thee our holy experiencing of Truth and Love, for His sake, Who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Amen.

MEANNESS.

Every meanness is a horrible extravagance, which has to be made good, somehow, and by someone. Whether it be begrudged time, begrudged money, or begrudged love, that is the cause, there is a bare gap in life, which needs to be filled by the germinating of the seeds of some sublime generosity. Meanness may be a passive begrudging, or withholding; or it may be an active destructiveness, or repression of life. Slander, resentment, unforgivingness, and greediness, are all forms of meanness, which can only be driven out of a character by the influx of divine generosity.

O JESUS, Who gavest Thy very life for us, help us to give our lives daily for each other. Amen.

THE WAY OF HOLY SOULS.

On the Way of Holy Souls, there is much patient waiting for God; nevertheless there is a divine progress in the Life Everlasting. Some, who set out on that Way, and hope to walk it with the companions of Christ, are lost, or belated, because they worship the symbols of religion, not seeing beyond them into their limitless significance; and they rest in church-observances as a finality, instead of being thankful for them, as the diverse means for the many hearts to reach the one Aim—the unbroken union of man's spirit with its Maker, in all fulness and freedom. Walking in the Way of Holy Souls implies faithful devotion, the parting with all encumbrances, and the advancing from one accomplished work to another in steady ongoing. The chief staff for the Way is Prayer, which quickens godly activity, and is again engendered by holy action. On the Way, there are sublime soul-grandeurs—the heights of transfiguration, in moments of spiritual passion; the coming of the Holy Ghost, after the agony of desolation; the opening of the hearing ear; the loosening of the fiery tongues; the unbinding of hands and feet, at the

command of the Living Word. And no day of the endless journey is not instinct with ecstatic surprises and stupendous amazements.

DRAW us ever to Thee, Dear Lord, by the Way of the solitudes of Prayer, lest we be lost in trivial vexations and petty self-satisfactions. Amen.

CARES.

Man chooses to have a thousand petty cares, instead of to have one great care. He aims at pleasing himself and his neighbours by niceties of style and appearance, and he prides himself on his particularity; but he is particular about the wrong things; for he exercises himself about unreality instead of about Reality; and he prefers a smart appearance to a clean conscience. He indolently acquiesces in the outward forms of religion; forgetting that Christ's constant cry was: "Simplify! Simplify!" And he so loves the world, that the love of the Father is not in him.

HELP us, O Loving Father, not to invent, nor multiply cares, but to keep our lives pure and simple, that they may become wide channels for Thy Grace; for His sake, Who taught us that we must become as little children if we would enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Amen.

RODS.

The Lord never lays a rod of chastening upon us, but that we may pick it up, and plant it in the earth, where it will burgeon and blossom, for our soul's delight. The rods may become beautiful trees, to shade our gardens, and provide fruits for our own and other men's tables, and flowers for the graves of our dead.

O MOST Just and Holy Lord, may we learn to love Thy chastening, and to see in it the Loving Hand of Deliverance; for the sake of Him, on Whom was laid the chastisement of our Peace. Amen.

WISDOM.

It is well worth man's while to seek to attain wisdom; for it is the exact point of balance on the scale of life. Wisdom builds its temple out of the materials of experience; and experience is the gift which it offers on the altar of humanity. The richness of a man's experience depends on the depth and height of his living, and on the intensity of his aim. Sorrow is the foster-mother of Wisdom; and labour is its kind nurse; and when Wisdom is full-grown, humanness is the source of its strength, and its way of access into the divineness of the Everlasting. Wisdom sleeps best on the hard bed of the manger, or on the straight bed of the cross; and it thrives best on the spare bread of the common lot. Wisdom's dawn is the Dayspring from on High; and its passing is its absorption into the unsetting Sun of Righteousness. Its life is not measured by ecstatic moments, and periods of dreariness; but flows continuously from its birth in the simplicity of an outhouse to its resurrection from the rigidity of the rock-hewn tomb.

O THOU, Who hast ordained Wisdom to be our guide, from the cradle to the grave, help us ever to seek it where alone it is to be found; for the Counsellor's sake. Amen.

LADDERS TO HEAVEN.

A man needs first to make his ladder to heaven, and then to climb it. The ladder is difficult to make; so many a man is too indolent to make it; and, when he has made his ladder, many a man has not the energy to climb it. It is well worth while for a man to make and to mount his ladder, for both earth and heaven are enriched by what is carried up, and by what is brought down the ladder. The ladders are made of various materials; and some are made entirely of one material, and others, of every conceivable material. Some of the

ladders are beautiful, and some of them are ugly ; but the chief point about a ladder is, that it should be able to bear a man's weight, and that it should reach its destined height. The ladders may be set up anywhere : one man sets up his ladder from a church-spire ; another sets up his ladder from a tree-top ; and another sets up his ladder from the bottom of a deep, dark pit. And it is always possible to re-construct new ladders from those, which have been ill-made, or insecurely placed, and have fallen.

HELP us, O Divine Architect of the Universe, so to build our ladders of enduring character, that we may both mount to heaven for inspiration, and descend to earth and to hell, for our own and the whole world's salvation, for the True Way's sake. Amen.

THE ADORATION OF THE LAMB.

They only are continuously happy, whose whole lives are one unbroken act of adoration of the Lamb. We live by the love of God ; and why so many of us are unhappy is because we are ungrateful to the Source of our being. If we would love our trials, and not fling away our crosses, we should feel sure that we were sharing the life and passion of our Redeemer ; but, alas, many do not know Him when they see Him, and they let Him go by alone, never offering to bear His cross, and not realizing the honour of their own crosses. Whom we truly love, we are right glad to suffer for ; and we count the suffering not a shame, but an honour : let us apply this from our human experience of life to our Divine experience of it ; and we shall have the never ending joy of continual service and perpetual adoration. So shall we be ever making memorials of the Life and Death of our Redeemer in our secret lives, and entering into the supernal joys of His Resurrection and Ascension. Our adoration of the Lamb is not sincere, and is not acceptable to Him, unless it bears

and assuages the grievous dolours of mankind, and springs from homefelt and simple love.

O LAMB of God, give us Thy meekness and gentleness, and Thy willingness to atone for the sins of others, evermore. Amen.

MAN'S RETURN.

Every man born returns to God, whether reluctantly, sadly, or rejoicingly ; and no two men return by the same track. Let us seek so to live, that, when we look back upon our lives, we can praisefully acknowledge that we have been able to learn, through all our circumstances, however unbearably arbitrary or contrary they may have seemed. Let us thank God for all, wherethrough we may come to Him—pain, temptation, sorrow ; the majesties of the open universe ; the symbols of venerable religions ; the honourable affection of our fellow-beings ; the quiet and steady calling of our higher nature ; the lonely questings of our desolate soul. And let us try to bring to God the bright and beautiful and sustaining flowers and fruits of our experience, and not the Sodom-apples of our failures.

O HOLIEST, bring us all to Thee, by the diverse paths, which Thou hast appointed for us ; for Jesus' sake. Amen.

LIGHT AND AIR.

Many envy the lives of the God-illuminated, and long, in a half-hearted way, to live in the Divine Light and Atmosphere. They, who would receive the Divine Light, must open their hearts' shutters and doors, and leave them open by day, and by night ; and they must be as careful about their souls' health, as they are about their bodies' welfare. For every new ray of Light, they should be correspondingly thankful, evermore offering new love to God. If in the affairs of their material life,

they make the necessary effort to obtain what they want, so, in the spiritual life, they should train themselves to be sensitive enough to know their needs, and to satisfy them; for the same laws obtain in both worlds, as to effort and result. Instead of seeking temporal advantage, through selfishness, and courting man's approval and liking, through placing him under obligations, let them make ready the dwelling-place of the Lord in their hearts, that they may thenceforward live in the happy amazement of the Eternal Light, and breathe evermore the air of the Holy Spirit.

O THOU, Who art Light of Love, and Breath of Life, from eternity to eternity, help us all, by earnest and steadfast desire, to become capable of receiving Thee. Amen.

BROTHERS.

Let the heaven-born and the earth-born never forget that the hell-born are their brothers; and that birth, so far as regards themselves, is purely accidental—it depending on their parentage whether they are heaven-born, or earth-born, or hell-born; and not on any effort of their own. Let neither the heaven-born, nor the earth-born, despise the hell-born—the victims of unholy parentage. The uplifting of the earth-born, and the redemption of the hell-born are the obligations of the heaven-born; and many of the heaven-born glory in the privilege of their obligation.

O OUR Father, bring us all to Thee again, through the various experiences of our human birth and pilgrimage; for His sake, Whose incarnation is the dignifying of all human birth and living. Amen.

THE HIGHER LIFE.

The further we progress in the divine life, the higher we raise our ideal. Let us pray to be delivered from our sins, that we may have no ignominious sorrows.

And let us try to realize that, for all the great things of life, we must pay the great price of renunciation and of effort. Whenever a mortification, or the need for sacrifice occurs, let us not be reluctant in yielding the due, or in suffering the limitation; else we bid fair to lose our incomparable privilege of learning-pain. Every dolorous experience can teach us something new of God, if we are willing to learn; if we doubt this, let us look to the world-wide results of the universal cross. They, who seek to contravene suffering are opposing the rhythmic laws of the universe, and creating needless discord. They, who learn to exult in their trials, find that the highest and deepest fellowship with our Lord is the suffering fellowship, the fellowship of self-denial. But we cannot understand the mysteries of the Higher Life and share its blessedness with our dear Lord, until we suffer and sacrifice *willingly*; for it is the willingness that is the point of the cross-bearing. To the unwilling, the cross is a reproach, a misery, a torment, a disgrace; but, to the willing lover, a holy, all-pervading calm, the assurance of the Beloved's Friendship.

HELP us, Dear God, always to see the Holy Face of our Lord, and to feel His Dear Presence, in all our afflictions; that every trial may bring us more into the Divine Fellowship; for His sake. Amen.

THE STAIR.

Step by step, the stair of Time leads us to Eternity; step by step, we rise above man-made dwellings, human-bred ideas, worldly aims, earthly satisfactions. Very gradually in the ascent, we learn the meaning of sorrow, affliction, and pain; and reach the height, where we can renounce our encumbrances, not only submissively, but joyfully. The higher we mount, the further we penetrate into the domain of the Real, and the less we are troubled by the disquieting dream—Illusion. Let us thank God for the blessed realization that comes to all, who climb upward.

O THOU, towards Whom we climb, give us such a beckoning Vision of Reality, that we may never falter by the way, but press eternally forward. Amen.

OUR TRUE BEING.

In every most transient expression of the varied life of nature, there is the prophesy of Eternity. In every fleeting cloud we see the Everlasting in one of the glorious moments of its myriadfold existence. Nothing perishes; but all things change; and no two moments of our life are alike, or bear the same results. Time flows continuously into Eternity; and every man's life is an episode in the life of mankind. The individual is a link in the universal; and the spirit of every man is a part of the Spirit of God. We are not disconnected units, we are members of one great body, and let us so live that the members are a glory to the Whole. If we live for Eternity and in universality, we shall forget our little selves, and pass into the existence of God, Who sent us forth from Himself, that we might bring the accumulation of our holy experience of life to Him.

O THOU, Who art our True Being, let us live evermore in Thine Immensity. Amen.

COME UNTO ME.

"Come unto Me!" says Jesus: "Come!" So many of us, nowadays, know Jesus almost as little as the heathen do, who have never heard of Him; and live as unconsciously of Him, as those did, who lived on earth before the Lord's Manifestation in Time. They know of Him by hearsay; and some of them profess to believe in His Revelation in a formula, which is one of their cachêts of respectability; but they avoid knowing Him, either from motives of indifference, or because they see that knowing Him would mean their entire sacrificing of themselves. Yet to these, who would fain be strangers to Him, Jesus is, daily, and nightly saying: "Come!"

..... Someone is saying: "I am very tired of myself; and I would like to come to Jesus; but I do not know how to come." Dear soul, it is not really difficult to draw near to Him. You can begin by visualizing Him in the Lives of Him, which His loving companions wrote, and left, as an everlasting heritage to all seekers; and when you have come to know Him, through the Living Word of the Gospels, you can close your eyes, and visualize Him, by habitual thought. By degrees, you will learn to talk to Him, and thus you will come to know Him; and your one desire will then be to be worthy of the dear and high companionship of the Son of God. You will learn to love to please Him; and soon you will learn to rejoice in casting out self, to make ever more and more room for Him in your heart. Your offering of time, money, labour, life, will be no sacrifice, but a radiant joy. And when you hear Jesus, saying to you: "You shall walk with Me in white; "you will find it easy to forsake your sins, because of the love you bear to Him. And your one aim in life will be to try to help others to come into the sacred silences, where they can hear the Voice of the patient Son of God, saying: "Come unto Me!" and to help them, by holy indications, to obey the ever-gracious Voice.

SHEPHERD of Souls, we hear Thy dear Voice; and we come, gladly giving up all, for the sake of Thy great love. Amen and Amen.

TRUE FRIENDSHIP.

If we follow the high leadings of life, and do the selfless acts that bring us into close union with the friends of God, we shall find that our friendships become one unbroken and happy amazement. There is no divine life without continual progress; and every holy friendship leads from one dear learning to another. We can live with the Saints, not only in their past, earthly

lives, but in the present light of their transfigured lives. It is not only remembering them, but the consciousness of their living presence, that saves and helps us.

○ THOU, Who art the Friend of man, help us to form only holy alliances, both in visibility and in invisibility. Amen.

BLESSED 'BE SORROW.

Blessèd be sorrow, yea, blessèd and magnified for ever. They, who have learnt its incomparable secret, live with it cheerfully, by day, and sleep with it in their arms by night. They know that their intensity of life is entirely in proportion to their experience; and they feel that they are learning slowly, yet steadily and progressively, through the sufferings that have been and are their chief honour. Anguish is a specially made crown, which our Loving Lord gives us—a crown carefully proportioned in weight and size for us by His own dear hands. They guard their suffering jealously from profane eyes, for it is their most sacred gift from God—their tie of blood-relationship with Our Lord and all the Blessèd Martyrs; their bond of gentle brotherhood with the Lamb of God and all the Happy Saints. Very few souls can see and rejoice in the Revelation of Sorrow, in their early life; few have the perception of it as their born-nature. To most souls, it comes only with age and dolorous experience; indeed, many need not only life-long suffering, but some overwhelming woe of desolation, some unbearable torture of physical agony, before they are able to see the meaning of their own and of the universal cross. And the mystical experience enables them to reach out hands of comfort and help to the desolate, and, in some cases, to help the spiritually blind to open their eyes to the light of the Revelation. When we hear a soul blending its past and its present in one agonized cry to the future, we should point it to Christ's eternal NOW of salvation, and lead it, by His grace, into His dear peace.

O THOU, Who hast given us sorrow, and the inexpressibly holy gifts of sorrow, accept and intensify our lively and continual Adoration of the Cross, for our Blessed Lord's sake.

ON THE JOURNEY.

The journey, which every man eventually makes, is the journey through Immensity. He cannot set out on that journey until he realizes that his accumulated labours are a mass of futility. On the eternal way, he learns to appreciate variety, and, therefore, to be tolerant, and he finds that it is impossible for a man to cut himself loose from mankind; and that every breath, that he takes, affects the whole world; he sees that no man is so poor as to be without the wealth of dreams, and the riches of experience; and that as light only needs to come, to be effective, so friendship only needs to enter life, to transform it; and that the light of the world is the shining-through of the inner Christ-Light from the lives of the God possessed.

HELP us, O dear Guide of Souls, so to make use of life's experiences, that each day may bring us nearer the Divine Goal of all longing. Amen.

EXPERIENCE-WISDOM.

When I was a boy, I saw an old man, offering staves by the wayside, to the youths, who passed him. Few of the youths would accept the gift, saying that the staves were too heavy, or that there was a newer fashion of staff thenadays. And now that I am an old man, I see many of those, who were then the youths, but are now aged, offering staves by the wayside, with scant acceptance, and scantier thanks. Yet there is nothing more enjoyable, than making staves and offering them to the passers-by.

O LIFE, Who hast saved us, and taught us, help us evermore to help our fellow-beings. Amen.

GOD IN MAN.

Every man born shows us something of God ; yet we reject most men, because they do not show us the whole of God at once. All men embody some attribute or condition of God ; therefore every man should learn to accept his fellowmen. In humanity we may see God as light, as storm, as destroyer, as builder, as discipliner, as benefactor ; and every man can teach us something of our mysterious and unknowable God.

HELP us, O our Creator, to find Thee evermore in those, whom Thou hast made in the Divine Image. Amen.

REFINING.

Shall the steel complain of the furnace, or the spirit of man of the flame that tempers it ? No man wishes to be a clod, and to stifle, either deliberately, or carelessly, the Divine Life within him. Every man born wishes to be the best he may be ; but very few of us will submit to the Refiner's Fire. We need to be continually reminding ourselves that we can never eventuate as useful and beautiful and shining metal, until we are purged from our earthiness by the generous Fire of Grace. Let us arouse ourselves from our inertia, and desire that our dross may be burned from us ; and, on the first stirring of our will, the Master will refine us, either by personal sorrow, or by our realization of the sorrows of the world.

BURN from us, O Pentecostal Flame, all sordidness and sloth, that we may be used for Thy purposes, as means for Thy Grace. Amen.

A LABOUR OF LOVE.

Any man can be a cleaner of lamps by day, and a lighter of lamps by night ; he can only clean the lamps with life ; for life alone can make the glass and the

metal bright and clear. No lamp is too smoke-begrimed by indifference, too blurred by sense, too befogged by the damp of sin, to be unresponsive to earnest polishing.

O THOU Eternal Giver, may we ever prepare for, and spread Thy Light; for the Light of Light's sake. Amen.

SCOPE.

Folk say continually: "I have no scope; I am limited by avocation, heredity, uncongeniality, straitness, ugliness, disease, or poverty." Yet every man has the universe and eternity for his objects and aims. Let all men realize that their crying need for development is the surest prediction of their eternity; and that their consciousness of limitation is the earnest of their power to win the freedom of the universe.

TURN, O our God, our senses, from resting in the unreal, into the active perception of the Real; that we may use all circumstances for our development, in Thine inscrutable Grace, and according to Thy secret wisdom; for His sake, Who triumphed through the manger and the cross. Amen.

FEAR.

Let those who are in the hold of fear remember that it is the night-watch that tries a man's mettle, and that most night-alarms vanish at daybreak. It is impossible for a soul to cast out fear, except by the grace of God; therefore he must seek that grace where it alone can be found—in the gardens of prayer and of faith. And he must always remember that fear lays him open to attacks of the destroyer, whereas courage raises a wall against the enemy; and that he is the beloved child of the Highest, the freeman of sweet Heaven; and that angel-guards are round about him from the cradle to the grave; and that the laws of the

universe are friendly to him. He need not fear the armies of the alien, thundering as they come; for, even though he should die at their hand, death would but be his deliverance from fear into the Loving Hand of Almighty God, Who needed his invisibility more than his visibility.

○ THOU, Who hast guarded us, from infancy, through peril after peril, help us to put our full confidence in Thee, for His sake, Who destroyed death by His willing acceptance of it. Amen.

EFFLORESCENCE.

All the beautiful and many coloured efflorescences of life spring from the various plants of the Loving Heart. Meekness is the root of the flower of grace; and sympathy, the root of the flower of courtesy. Generosity springs from gratitude; and forgiveness, from thankfulness. Peace spreads its blossoms along every bough of renunciation; and joy breaks forth on the ever-living tree of self-giving. Sorrow bears the passion-flower of humanness; and pain, the trembling wind-flower of pity. Wherever there is growth, there is God; therefore let every man look to his garden.

○ SOURCE of Life and Beauty, may man's virtues worthily magnify the garden of his birthright, for Divine Grace's sake. Amen.

SYMPATHY.

Most people's inability to help arises from their entire lack of sympathy. They have not realized that they are one with *all*—not only one with their brothers and sisters of the One Aim, but with the whole body of humanity. They do not understand that God is not sustained by adoration only, but by every deed of human kindness. This ignorance is not an excuse to anyone but themselves; and the effects of their negligence

will rise up and judge them; and their defence: "I did not know the woman at my side was dying;" "I had no idea that the man, my friend, was living in wilful sin;" "I never thought that I was responsible for anyone but myself;" will be of no avail, to avert the purgatory of realization, and of expiation, that awaits them, when their eyes are opened, in the life beyond the grave. Sympathy can only grow out of love; therefore, let us cultivate and develop love's faintest stirrings, until, through loving perception, we become far-seeing, and can apprehend the sorrows and sins of others, by an inward sense; and, by that same inwardness, can alleviate and absolve them.

O HOLY Love, Who art ever with us, enable us to pray Thy Prayer to Our Father, which makes us all brothers and sisters. Amen. •

FAITH.

Many pray, for years, hopelessly, and without faith, heedless that, if they do not unite their faith to God's love, their prayers cannot be answered. But, as soon as they pray, with faith, they may hope that their desire will be granted. For those, who lack faith, there is no better affirmation than: "Lord, I believe: help Thou mine unbelief."

MAY Thy power continue to grow in us, according as we hold our hearts open to Thy merciful grace; for His sake, Who said: "According to Thy faith be it unto Thee." Amen.

A MOUNTAIN-DWELLER.

Love languishes in the valley; for mountain air is its native element. When love visits the valley, it hastens to return home; for, in the valley, its best qualities are suffocated; and there it would soon die. On the mountain, Love is developed and intensified by sacrifice and

suffering ; by toil, self-effacement, and aspiration ; but, in the valley, Love is diminished and weakened by the receiving of offerings, by ease, pleasure, and self-satisfaction. In the valley, Love degenerates into an animal ; but on the mountain, Love becomes divine.

O THOU God of Love, teach us that we are Thy children of love ; and evermore help our love to climb up to Thee ; for Love's eternal sake. Amen.

PEACE.

Peace is not a physical indifference to anxiety, but the crown of overcome sorrow, pain, or temptation ; it is a quietness of the soul, not of the life's surroundings ; a deep inward realization, not an outward attainment. Peace lies not only through the battlefield, but on it, for those who have the inner quietude of trust in God. It is no mirage in the desert, no solitary blossom in the wilderness ; it is the abiding sense of God's presence throughout the entire universe, and of His love for, and care of His whole creation. The soul, that is in acquiescence to the Divine Will, is able to keep its peaceful attitude, through living by the Divine Grace from moment to moment. The peaceful can live in any place, and in any manner of life. Sometimes, in our severest trials, we have the deepest peace, because, while we are bearing the cross, we have the truest fellowship with Christ, Who is our Peace. Many cannot feel at peace, through not being sure that they are accepted by God ; but God rejects no one, it is only man who picks and chooses : the souls of all men are equally dear to God, Who made and loves them all. God foreknew our devious courses, and sent His Blessed Son, Jesus, to reclaim, and redeem us all, freely. By meditating on the at-one-ment of God and man, through the life and death of the Redeemer, we can obtain the peace that passes all human understanding, it being of the essence of divineness.

GRANT us Thy Peace, which neither life nor death can take away, O Jesus. Amen.

HE THAT HATH EARS.

The diverse sounds of the universe create no discord for him, whose ear is attuned to the rhythms of God, which make the strange, and often terrible music of the cosmos. If we wince at the world's cry of war-anguish, let us remember that God is our Father; and that He is infinitely more compassionate than we are; and that, if He permits suffering, greater than we dare think of, it must be for some loving and remedial end; greater than we can conceive. We know, personally, that suffering is His own sweet call to the soul; so universal anguish may be His tenderest call to the race.

HELP us, O Divine Jesu, amid all the beautiful and terrible voices that allure us, and amid the crashing of the chords of passionate anguish to hear evermore Thy Divine Motif. Amen.

UNREST.

The emptiness of the heart is the cause of its unrest; and unrest, within, opens the gate to the enemy-without. But inward Peace holds the gate against innumerable foes; and where Peace sleeps in the guest-chamber, desire cannot find a lodging. Let us make the heart a cradle for the Infant God, that Mighty Spirit may grow in us, and that our lives may be peopled with the angels. So shall we have peace, within, and victory, without.

O OUR God, divinely far, yet humanly near, let all our expectation be of Thee, that all our trust may be in Thee, and that in Thee we may find rest. Amen.

FRIEND-WISDOM.

The wise man begs of his friends: "Tarry with me to quicken me; but leave me that I may develop." He knows that if his friends saw too much of him, they

would either weary of him, because of his deficiencies and drawbacks; or they would cling so closely to him, that they would suffocate his divine individual energies, and come between him and God. So he attunes his mind and his heart to a holy sensitiveness, as to his comings and goings, and all other dealings with his friends; with the result that they and he are an ever new joy and help to one another. Thus it is the wise only who make permanent friendships.

O THOU, Who art High Wisdom, endue us evermore with the holy wisdom of true love. Amen.

SPREADING THE WORD.

Every receiving necessitates corresponding giving; and we must bestow whatever we are dowered with. If we have experienced the eternal joy of the redeemed, through the stupendous Gospel of the Crucified, we are bound to tell the dear news of life to all, who are willing to hear it, and to consecrate, by the carrying of the Lord's messages, the habitations of misery and darkness. By the holiness of steadfast souls, Jesus is redeeming the world; and we should pray, and endeavour to be among His humble and faithful followers. We should aim at the true piety, that continually pleads with and for the irreligious: with them, to forsake their sins; and for them, that God will arouse them to true life in Him, in all holy souls' dear fellowship. We must not be disheartened by lack of result, nor deterred by false shame: God will deliver us, in all reproach; and we shall hear dear Jesus saying: "Blessed are ye!"

O GOD, make us holy enough to be allowed to be Thy messengers, for His sake, Who came to minister. Amen.

OBEDIENCE.

It is only unfaltering love, that can bring the heart into complete dutifulness; and reverent regard alone

inculcates submission. Holy Obedience is the one happy Way of Life. So long as we resent our mental and physical drawbacks and disabilities, we are tortured by unrest ; but as soon as we cease to rail against them, we become thankful for them ; for we see from what dangers they have delivered us—flattery, desire, pride, and lust. We would not have our love at fault ; and as soon as we realize that we have become disobedient to the heavenly vision, we must remember the Love of our Heavenly Father and turn our hearts to Him anew in true devotion : for it is love alone that can save us from sin. The sense of morality is a safeguard ; but love is the only deterrent from sin—the one armour that helps us to withstand temptation. The strength of love gives us the courage of Obedience.

KEEP us, through love, in unwavering Obedience, O Jesus, Who hast saved us, again and again, when we had no power, of ourselves, to help ourselves ; and defend us evermore. Amen.

ASCENSIONTIDE.

AND I, IF I BE LIFTED UP, WILL
DRAW ALL MEN UNTO ME.

The Ascension of our Blessed Lord's spiritual body into Heaven is for evermore the glorious type of man's ascending, by faith, while here on earth, into the Holy Mysteries ; and also the earnest of the eventual accomplishment of the gradual ascension of all men's spiritual bodies into Heaven, after the death of their mortality. The merciful spiritual appearances of the Divine Lover of Souls, after the entombment of His willingly sacrificed body, have transmuted the trembling Hope of the World into the steadfast and strong Faith of the Whole Cosmos. Blessed be the intrinsic splendour of the Saviour's spiritual body, which shone through His materiality, even before He put off His mortality, upon all, who

turned loving and rejoicing faces towards the light of His presence ; and blessed be the supernal radiance of the Ever-Glorified, which breaks upon all, who turn expectant and faithful eyes towards the majesty of His Kingship in the Great Beyond. "Yea:" He answers audibly, in loving antiphon: "and ever blessed be all the true followers of the Crucified ; for they shall become partakers with the Glorified." And our thankful hearts indeed reply, in glad response: "Dear Lord, we have found the adorable Cross, itself, to be the rejoicing Crown." The Unseen, into which our Blessed Lord entered, was His Home ; and it is also the Home of all of us ; for thence we came, and thither we go. But it is not easy for some of us to conceive of what we have not visibly seen, or of what we have not heard of first-hand, from some fellow-being as having been visibly seen by him ; therefore some of us are saying: "I do not believe" and "I doubt" and "My mind cannot attain unto the crediting of ancient narrations regarding the doubtful events of two thousand years ago." But let us keep our minds absolutely still, and hearken to the undoubtedly authentic Voice: "*And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me. . .*" Then, let us open our eyes, and look steadily upon the drawing, and we shall see that the Divine Utterer of the prophetic words, having pleaded with all flesh, by fire, and by sword, is drawing all men unto Himself. The drawing of mankind being so evident, we may well give credence to the Lord's being lifted up, as the cause of it ; and, always, the next step to believing is realizing. Let us all earnestly and faithfully set ourselves, alone, and in silence, to realize the Lord's being lifted up, which, by His ever-sweet and forgiving grace, He will enable all sincere seekers to do ; and, in the realization of it, we shall be made partakers in the glory of the Divine Ascent, looking ever upward to Him, where He now reigns in His Eternal Majesty, over-ruling, in His primordial wisdom, the unfathomable mystery of the seemingly chaotic universe. In the loneliness

and the silence of our desert, whatever that desert may be—pain, sorrow, contrition, or deliberate retirement from the world, we indeed come into the Realization (Glory be to God!) of the Ascension; not only the accomplished and Divine Ascension of our Blessed Lord, but our own human ascending, both into the perfect humanity of the man Christ Jesus, and into the omnipotent Divinity of the Lord of the Everlasting.

WE thank Thee, O our Loving Father, that Thou didst give blessed Jesus to be our human Pattern, and didst take Him to Thyself again, that the Mystic Christ might come to us, and abide in us, helping us evermore to attain unto that Holy Pattern of Life. And, as He arose from the dead, and ascended, so may we arise from our dead selves, and ascend, upborne by renunciation and holiness; for His dear sake. Amen.

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